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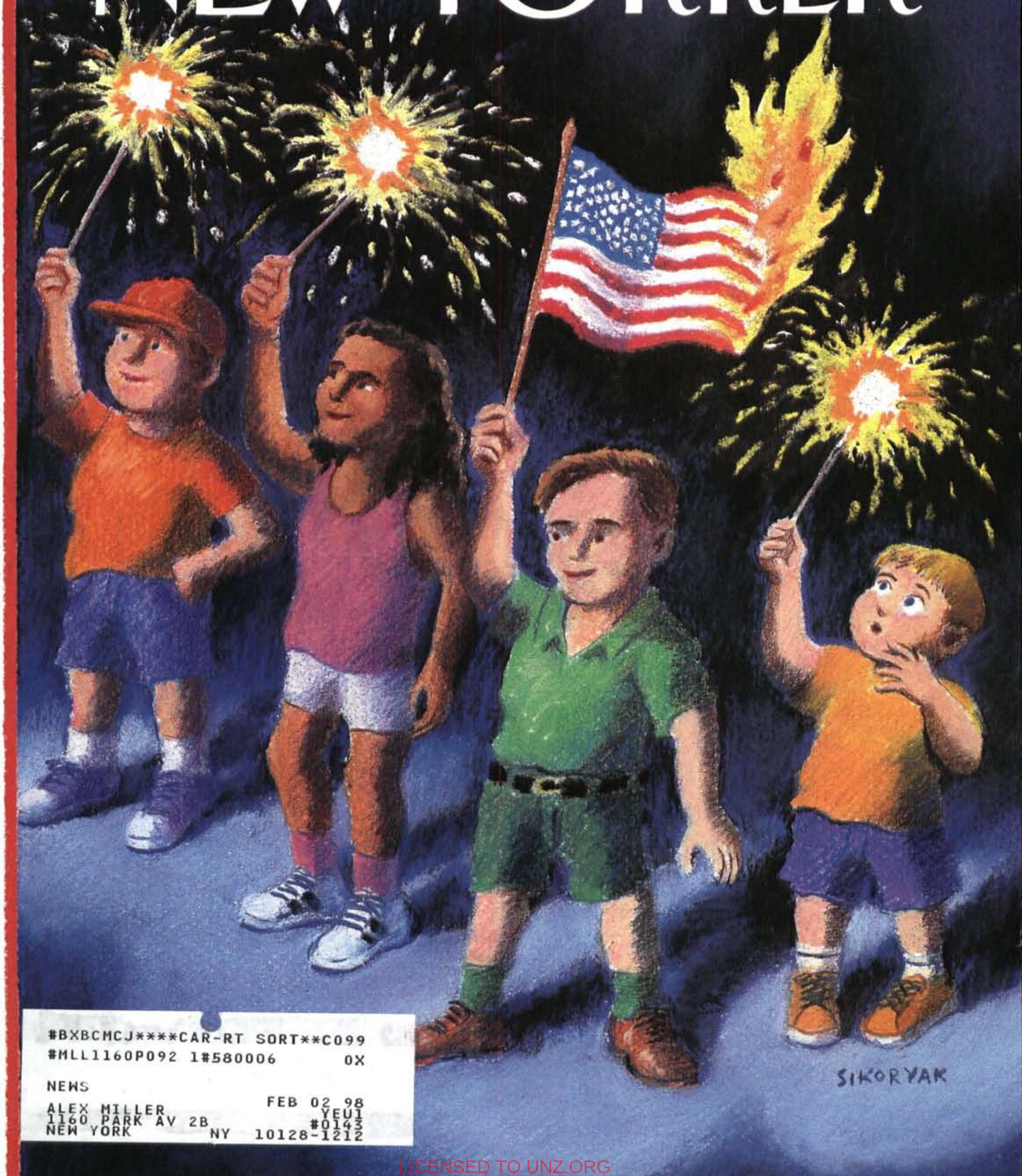

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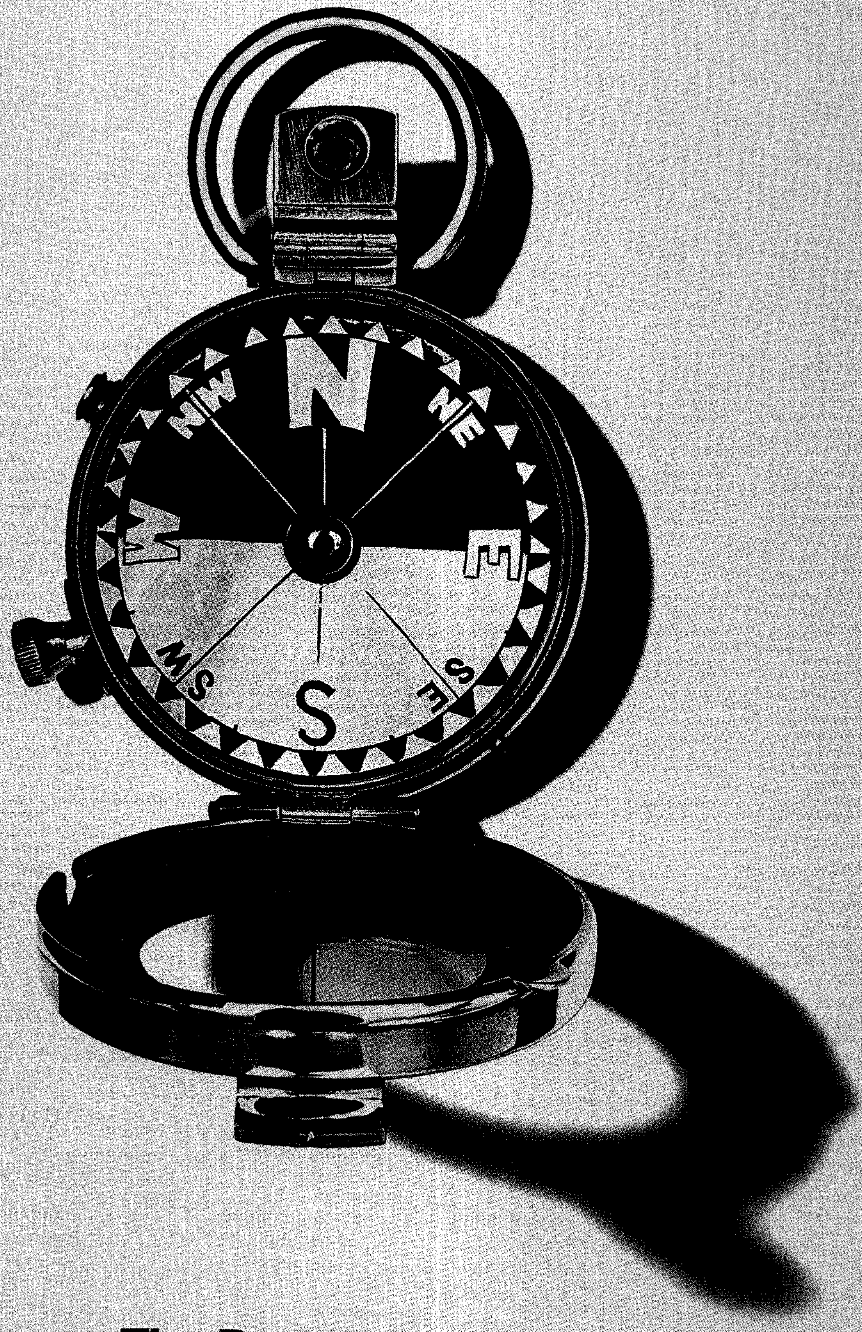

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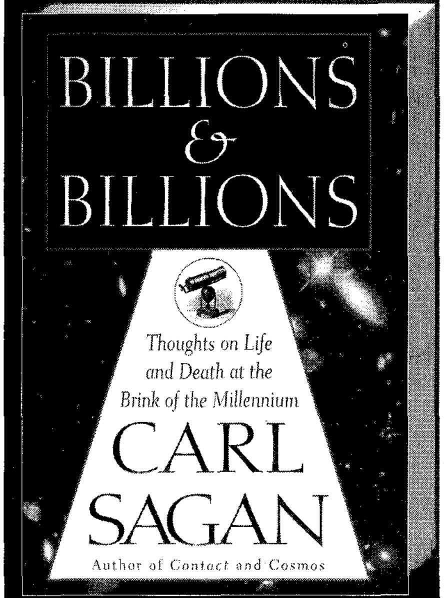

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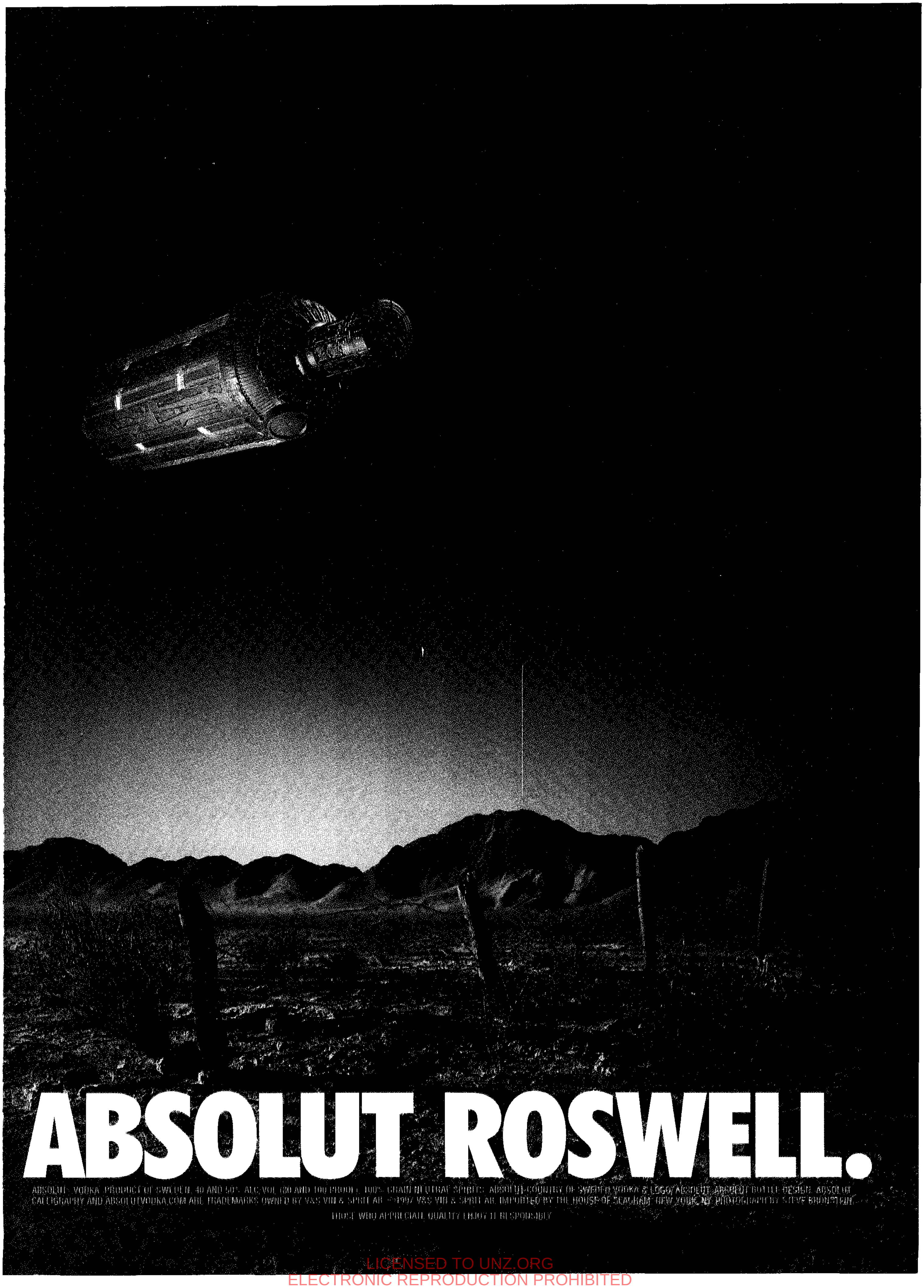

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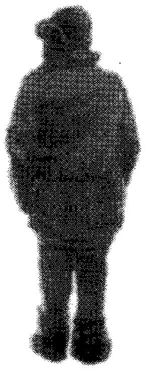

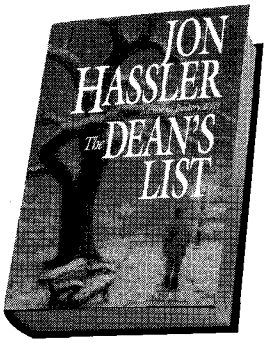

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COMMENT

REQUIEM

The unexpected legacy of Betty Shabazz.

THE funeral took place on Saturday, February 27, 1965, at the Faith Temple, on Amsterdam Avenue at 147th Street. The Faith Temple, originally built as a movie theatre, had become a house of Christian worship, but on that morning it was serving as a kind of makeshift mosque. The deceased, born Malcolm Little, thirty-nine years before, had lately, as part of his break with the Black Muslims and his embrace of orthodox Islam, become El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz; but he was still known to the world by the clipped, galvanizingly dramatic name under which he had emerged as the country's most prominent advocate of black nationalism: Malcolm X. Inside the Faith Temple, all the seats were filled, and thousands of people stood outside in the bitter cold, listening to the service over loudspeakers. Yet no more than a handful of nationally prominent people were present: the actor and playwright Ossie Davis, who gave the eulogy, and his wife, Ruby Dee; Dick Gregory, the comedian-activist; and a smattering of not quite first-rank civil-rights leaders.

The widow of Malcolm X, like her husband, died by violence. He was shot down before her eyes by cultist thugs angered by his apostasy; she—more horrifyingly, more intimately, more incomprehensibly—was fatally burned in a fire set by her (and Malcolm's) twelve-year-old grandson. Her memorial service is to take place on Sunday, June 29, 1997, at the Riverside Church, which overlooks the Hudson at 122nd Street. By then, this issue will have gone to press. Nevertheless, at this writing it is safe to predict that the mourners for Betty Shabazz will present a strikingly different picture from those who attended that funeral thirty-two years ago. The leaders of just about every important African-American organization will be there. (In 1965, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Roy Wilkins, the head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, were among the conspicuously absent.) So will scores of celebrities—musicians, writers, athletes, film stars and directors, broadcasters, and business leaders. And so will a very large number of politicians and elected officials—current and former members of Congress, mayors, Cabinet officers, and other high officials of the city, state, and federal governments. (At the Faith Temple, there were few elected officials of any kind, and no members of Congress—not even the

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usually undauntable Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.) When Malcolm X was gunned down, the carefully worded statements of mainstream black leaders seemed to echo, in delicate but still pointed terms, Malcolm's own notoriously impolitic remark that the assassination of John F. Kennedy was a case of "the chickens coming home to roost." King said that Malcolm's murder "should cause our whole society to see that violence and hatred are evil forces that must be cast into unending limbo," and Wilkins called it a "ghastly demonstration of the futility of resorting to violence as a means of settling differences."

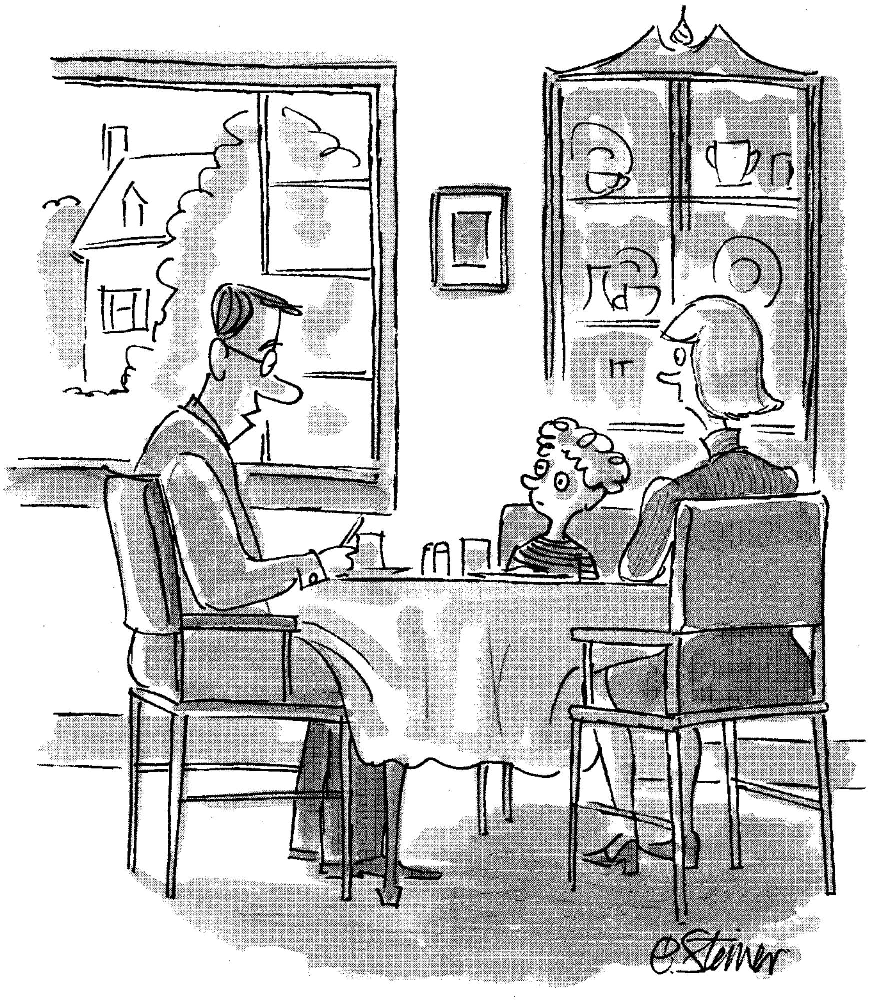
The uncomplicatedly openhearted response to the death of Betty Shabazz was no doubt due in part to the dignity and modesty with which she had lived her own exemplary life: widowed at twenty-eight, and pregnant at the time with the last two of Malcolm's six daughters, she returned to school, ultimately earning a doctorate and pursuing a career as a college administrator. Inevitably, though, she was best known as the unflamboyant carrier of her husband's political legacy. It was in this capacity that, in the final decades of her life, she became, with Coretta Scott King and Myrlie Evers-Williams, part of a trinity of matriarchal icons of African America. Yet the politics of Malcolm X had been a politics of separatism, right to the very end. Despite his indisputably genuine repudiation of the Black Muslims' crude dogmas of racial superiority and permanent racial hostility, he never embraced racial integration. The very rally at which he was murdered was closed to whites—a gesture that, alas, provided him no protection from his deadliest enemies.

On the day Betty Shabazz succumbed to her burns, the *Times* carried a remarkable account of ferment within the N.A.A.C.P., centered on what the reporter, Steven A. Holmes, called "the rethinking of its stance on integration." Specifically, the ferment expresses disillusionment with the failure of busing either to reverse the drift toward de-facto resegregation of urban public schools or to improve the quality of the education those schools provide. Indeed, the "national conversation" on race that President Clinton recently called for appears fated to dwell on the pros and cons of something that looks like self-segregation. While it's easy to be piously absolute about the virtues of integration, statements of principle carry only so far. Emancipation, as black America has learned the hard way, requires more than proclamation. And certainly the willingness of this most traditionally integrationist of civil-rights organizations to flirt with notions of something resembling "separate but equal" is not only an expression of despair; it is also an ironic tribute to the movement's vast successes. There is simply no danger, after all, of a return to the regime of legalized racial oppression that began to crumble after the N.A.A.C.P.'s 1954 victory in Brown v. Board of Education.

The rumblings within the N.A.A.C.P. are, like the veneration of Betty Shabazz, symptoms of a deep shift in African-American attitudes. A rough consensus, shaped by a curious combination of confidence and resignation, has been slowly emerging. Its elements include an insistence on an integrated workplace, a "soft" black nationalism that emphasizes African America's cultural distinctiveness, and a willingness to acknowledge that not every black problem is the result of white racism.

The rigorous separatism associated with the name Malcolm X is not part of that consensus, but his hopes that black Americans would assume a larger role in shaping their own destiny surely are. The mourners at his widow's memorial service may symbolize those hopes, even as the manner of her death—with its echoes of the troubled family lives of so much of the black underclass—symbolizes one of the major threats to their fulfillment. That separateness led to inequality was the great theme of the civil rights era. That inequality leads to separateness is the unavoidable conclusion of its aftermath.

—HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.,
AND HENDRIK HERTZBERG



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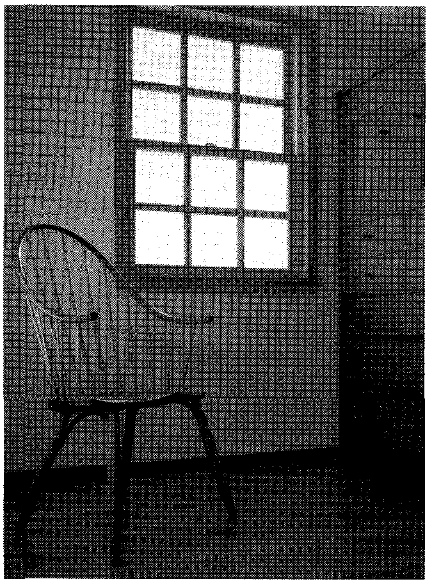

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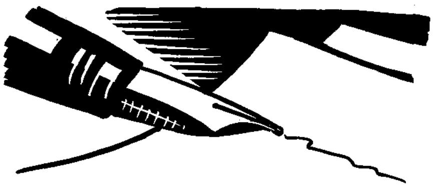

MILITARY MORALS

Roger Angell failed to take into account the central issues about Lieutenant Kelly Flinn and instead focussed on the apparent failure of the Air Force to be au courant on moral matters (Comment, June 2nd). He ignored the wronged woman in the case, Airman Gayla Zigo, whose husband had an affair with Flinn. The Air Force has an absolute obligation to defend Zigo's right to be protected from the predations of an officer, and officers have an absolute obligation to refrain from using the power of their office to take advantage of an enlisted person. Those are the only issues. The question of whether adultery should be a crime in the military is a red herring, dragged across the trail by Flinn's lawyers. In achieving her resignation, it succeeded. She should have been court-martialled.

David E. Steiner
Lieutenant Colonel U.S.A.F. (Ret.)
Lafayette, Colo.

As a former naval officer (1954-75), I share the shock and outrage of my civilian women friends at the outcome of Lieutenant Flinn's dalliance. To my outrage, however, is added the knowledge that young strangers in the military find themselves at the height of their sexuality and far from home, and that too easily they fall for those who claim to be "divorced," "close to divorce," or just "misunderstood." In my early years in the Navy, such liaisons were common. When brought to the attention of the command, they were handled by (1) counselling, (2) warning to stop the affair, (3) threat of transfer, (4) transfer. The idea that Flinn's behavior was a threat to national security is mind-boggling. The Air Force lost a good officer and tarnished the image that she had helped it project.

Judith W. Pond
Lieutenant Commander U.S.N.R. (Ret.)
Fairhaven, Mass.

I see the results of our sexually misguided culture every day: self-esteem crushed, bodies diseased, families destroyed. Two wrongs do not make a right, and if it was wrong for the Air Force to focus its frustration on Kelly Flinn, it is equally wrong for us to wink at what my tradition calls the "sin of adultery."

The Rev. Thomas P. Eggebeen
St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
Livonia, Mich.

THE CALM, NOT THE STORM

Flattered as I am that Terrence McNally credits me with teaching Garth Drabinsky how to scream (in John Lahr's Profile of Mr. Drabinsky, "The High Roller," June 2nd), I'm afraid I can't accept the undeserved recognition. Mr. Drabinsky's gifts are his own. Any shouting I may have done in Mr. McNally's presence was surely uncharacteristic of me. I am by nature a calm and introverted fellow.

Harold Prince
New York City

SPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

I was amused that Malcolm Gladwell cited a *Sports Illustrated* article I wrote about the Chicago Bulls' Steve Kerr as an example of black and white stereotyping in athletics ("The Sports Taboo," May 19th). My article did highlight Kerr's work ethic, resourcefulness, and intelligence, but these are hardly adjectives I reserve for white athletes. Consider this passage from the introduction to "Rice," a book of which I was coauthor with the San Francisco 49ers' receiver Jerry Rice, who is black: "the reason [Rice] is the best is simple: He is the hardest working man in throw business." I've exerted much effort to present fair and accurate depictions of athletes of all races, so that issues like the one raised by Gladwell can be debated, as he hopes, in an open and unself-conscious fashion.

Michael Silver
Oakland, Calif.

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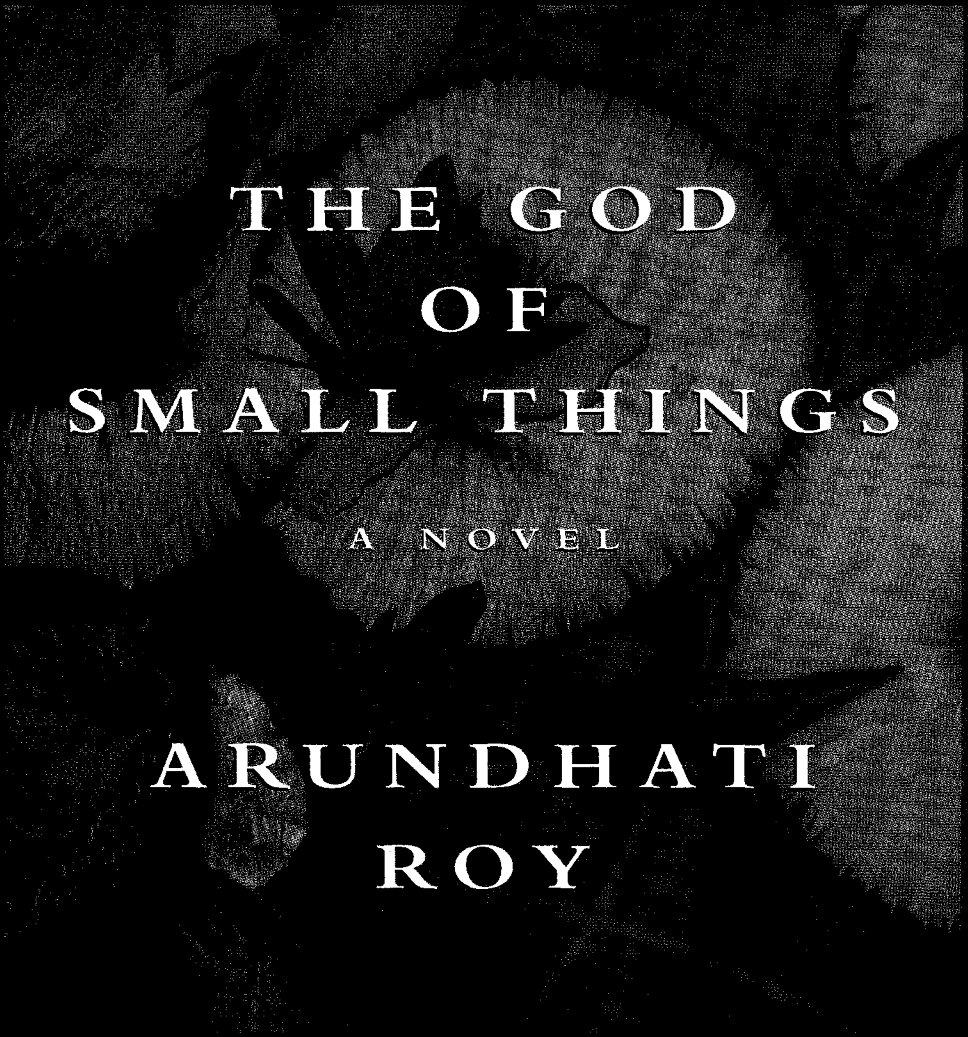

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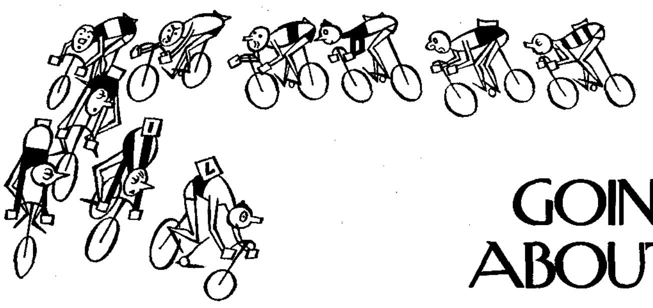

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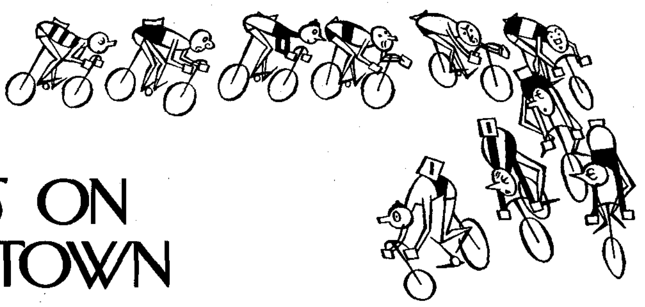

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Mass Appeal—From the Irish Repertory Theatre, a revival of Bill C. Davis's 1980 play about two priests (Tony Coleman and Paul McGrane) with a problem. In previews. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

Student Body Assembly—The performance artist Holly Hughes is joined by graduates of her Performance Artists Correspondence School and by members of Future Homosexuals of America. July 7 at 8. Continues, Mondays only, through July 28. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Those Left Behind—A psychological mystery by Ben Bettenbender, starring Rob Sedgwick and Janis Dardaris. Previews begin July 7. (Theatre 3, at 311 W. 43rd St. 246-5877.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Always . . . Patsy Cline—A two-person musical about the country-and-Western singer. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Annie—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything is possible: no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the New York public. Directed by Martin Charnin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

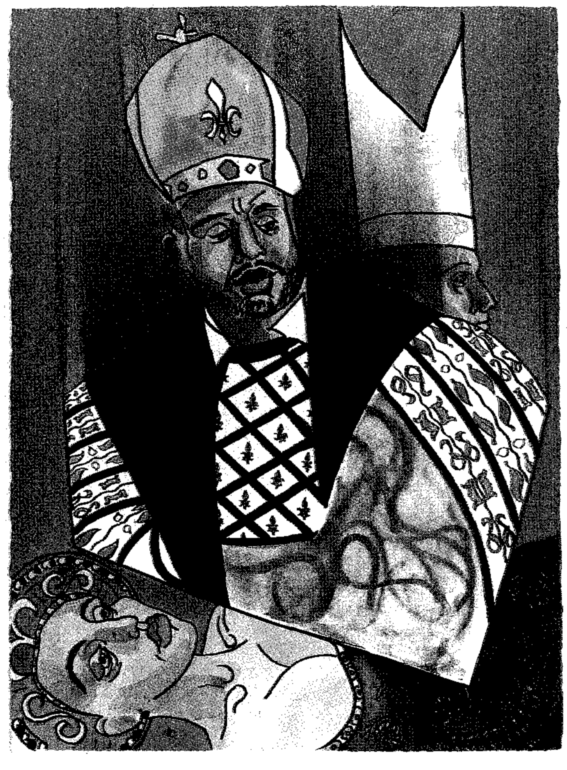
Barrymore—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmiked voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Bermuda Avenue Triangle—In this silly farce, a sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renée Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Bologna and Taylor's script traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Bicker—A play by Mary McBride, about the Society for the Preservation of Vice, a group of nine women and one man dedicated to opera and antimoral behavior. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650. Closes July 13.)

Candide—Spectacle substitutes for satire in this revival and revision of the 1956 Leonard Bernstein–Lillian Hellman–Richard Wilbur musical, directed by Hal Prince. Ultimately, the production drowns out all personality, with the exceptions of the expert Andrea Martin, who knows a laugh and how to get it, and Arte Johnson, a little comic who is large on charm. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/19/97.) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Collected Stories—Donald Margulies takes on the subject of literary betrayal in his new play, which stars Maria Tucci as a distinguished short-story writer and Debra Messing as a graduate student who absorbs her professor's lessons all too well. The pair are well directed by Lisa Peterson, and Tucci, whose character is a cross between Professor Kingsfield and Margo Channing, is especially good at expressing the various degrees of heartache that inevitably come to all mentors. (6/2/97) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)



Jayne Atkinson, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, and Josef Sommer, in Shakespeare's "Henry VIII."

DAVID TOMB

A Doll's House—A thrilling version of Ibsen's play, imported from the West End. Anthony Page's scrupulous, sensitive direction catches all the music and irony in the collusion between Nora (in a masterly turn by Janet McTeer) and her husband, Torvald (the passionate Owen Teale). (4/14/97) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Dream—A train wreck of a tribute to the great lyricist Johnny Mercer, in which only the singer Margaret Whiting and the singing jazz guitarist John Pizzarelli get out alive. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Forever Tango—This stepchild of Vegas and Buenos Aires gets everything right, from the basic ingredients (sex, pomade) to the big emotions (e.g., the weltschmerz of the bandonion players). One after another, the acrobatic couples flaunt their scissor steps with lubricious joy. But the real treat is the character dancing: it's a big surprise to encounter so many styles—suave, measured, sleazy, torrid, muscular, slapstick—and such a variety of song-length mini-dramas. Created and directed by Luis Bravo. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

The 49 Years—The Actors Studio Free Theatre presents Elizabeth Swados's new play with music, directed by and starring Estelle Parsons as a composer looking back on her past. (529 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes July 13.)

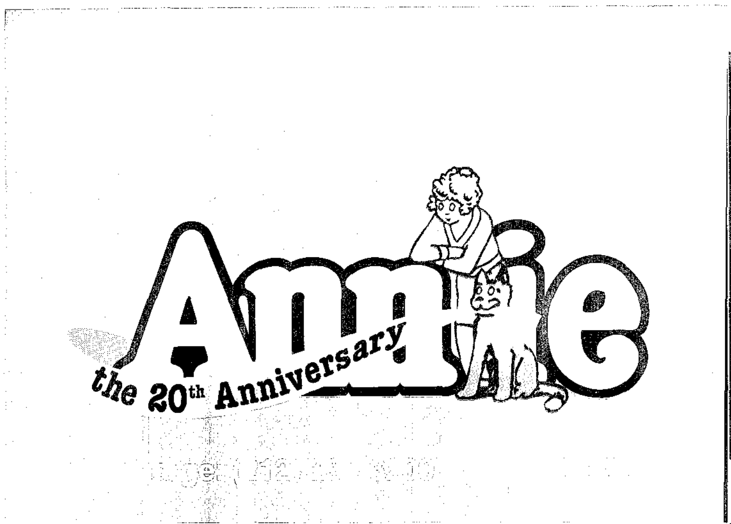
The Gin Game—Julie Harris and Charles Durning shine in the National Actors Theatre's funny, poignant revival of D. L. Coburn's 1977 play, about two elderly people who discover an antidote to their loneliness in a card game. Charles Nelson Reilly directed. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—Writer-director Moisés Kaufman treads the well-worn ground of Wilde's martyrdom to Victorian intolerance in an intriguing and ultimately moving new way: he renders the playwright's trials from edited transcripts, interposing letters from some of the principals, passages from Wilde's published writings, and assorted bits and pieces of other people's memoirs and commentaries. The result, thanks to Kaufman's clever (if occasionally self-indulgent) direction and a strong, versatile cast, is surprisingly theatrical. This story is so resonant as a modern morality play that sometimes it can seem as though there's nothing personal left in it; with the aid of Michael Emerson's paradoxically powerful portrayal of Wilde's increasing fragility, this production makes it once again the story of one man's tragedy. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Henry VIII—After ten years, the New York Shakespeare Festival reaches the end of its marathon with this late, flat, and possibly collaborative play, in a sumptuous Central Park production. Ruben Santiago-Hudson does as well as he can in the oddly passive role of the monarch, who comes off as more plotted against than plotting. Josef Sommer, as the chief plotter, Cardinal Wolsey, is magnificently unctuous, and, even more impressively, he makes the cardinal's downfall as believable as his earlier preëminence. While the rest of the cast is mixed, Bette Henritze shines as one of Anne Boleyn's ladies-in-waiting. The main problem is the play itself—the weird bits of exposition, the overlong speeches, and, perhaps, the overfamiliarity of the story result in a script that no amount of inspiration could entirely save. Directed by Mary Zimmerman. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 539-8750. Closes July 9.)

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Mary-Louise Parker) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (David Morse), is a clear-eyed marvel. (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Jekyll & Hyde—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel. With music by Frank Wildhorn, lyrics and a book



Annie

the 20th Anniversary

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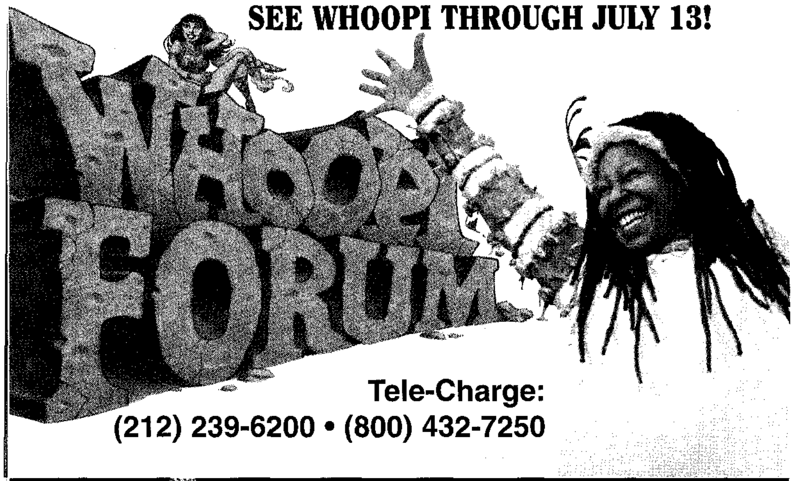

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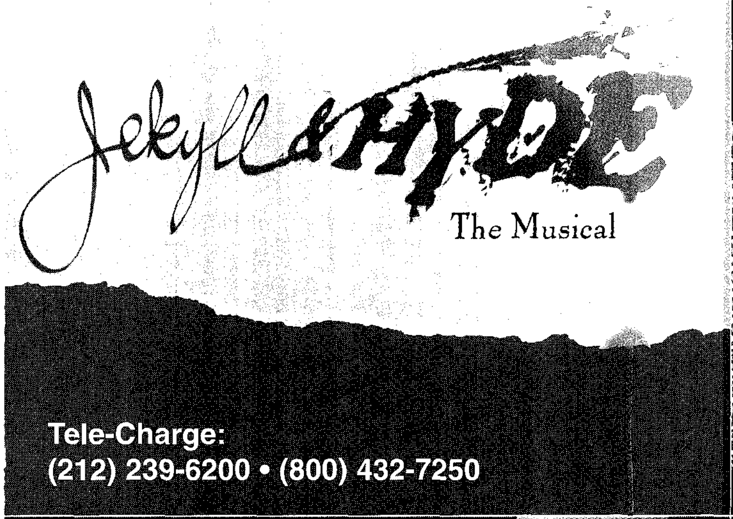

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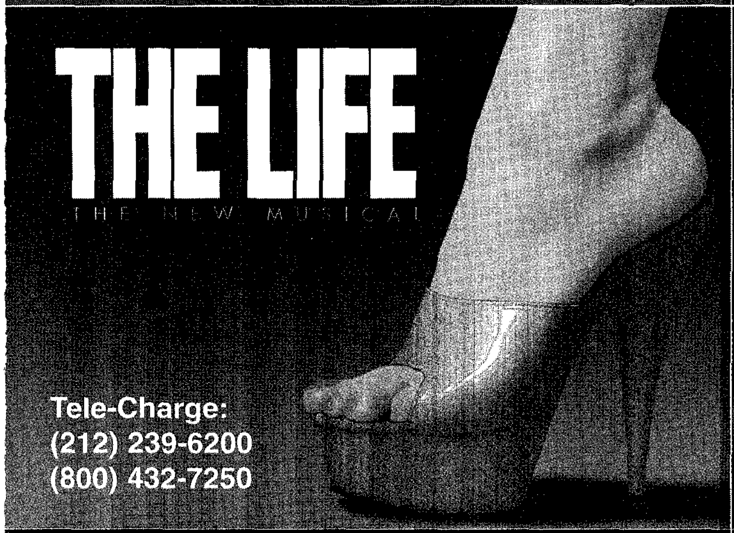

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by Leslie Bricusse, and solid direction by Robin Phillips. (5/12/97) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jest a Second!—James Sherman's new sequel to his 1991 Jewish-family comedy, "Beau Jest," in a Jewish Repertory Theatre production. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Life—This new musical, about the oldest profession in Times Square (before it became known as the new Times Square) and the men who profit from its practitioners, is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues, overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book. The cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Men on the Verge of a His-Panic Breakdown—Felix A. Pire, who has such fine stage presence that he makes even the costume and set changes interesting, brings a wacky improvisational spirit to his portrayal of six gay Latino immigrants, in a one-man show penned by Guillermo Reyes. Some of the characters seem to be hanging on to their American existence by a thread, but, make no mistake, *gringuito*, these are tough, tenacious men: as Federico, a lovable recent arrival from Central America, says, "I'm here to stay. Get used to it." Joseph Megel directed. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 265-1086.)

Mere Mortals and Others—Six short plays by David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing." Only two are new, but they are Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and the two actors who play them, Anne O'Sullivan and Arnie Burton, are perfectly buggy. "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border, and Nancy Opel, woman of a hundred lunatic accents, gives an inspired performance as a *loca* local and as a mad German doctor. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

My Night with Reg—The New Group wraps up its season with British playwright Kevin Elyot's 1995 comedy, about a group of six gay friends. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Queens Blvd.—A roommate comedy by Paul Corrigan. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 239-6200.)

The Seagull—An indoor-outdoor staging of Chekhov's play, by the Pulse Ensemble Theatre. (432 W. 42nd St. 695-1596. Closes July 12.)

Seeking the Genesis—A drama by Kia Corthron, about a single mother trying to rear two sons in an inner-city housing project. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes July 6.)

Sexy Dirty Bloody Scary—There you have it. A production of San Francisco's Splanchnic Theatricals, written by and starring Chris Brophy. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes July 13.)

Something Blue—A wedding comedy, written and performed by Michaela Murphy. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes July 13.)

Tap Dogs—Australia's work-booted tap troupe. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

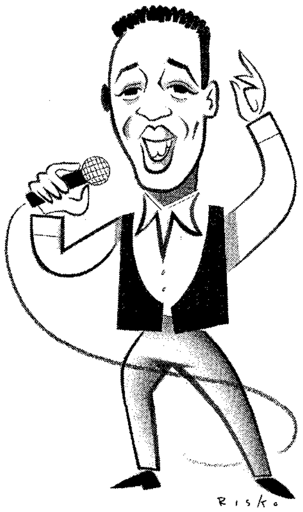
Tartuffe—Molière's comedy, directed by Terrence O'Brien, is the first of two outdoor productions by the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 914-265-9575. Closes July 20.)

Tell-Tale—Theatre Couture puts a drag spin on Edgar Allan Poe, in a comic thriller starring Sherry Vine and Jackie Beat and featuring puppetry by Basil Twist. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Titanic—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden voyage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments, it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter—the enormity of the disaster and its heartbreaking human details—and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Richard Jones directed. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200 . . . . **FULL GALLOP:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JOSEPH GABRIEL: MAGIC ON BROADWAY:** Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200. . . . **VICTOR/VICTORIA:** Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.



Issac Delgado and his orchestra, at Irving Plaza.

ROBERT RISKO

DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—Final performances of the season. July 1 at 8 and July 2 at 2 and 8: "Romeo and Juliet." . . . ¶ July 3-4 at 8 and July 5 at 2: "Rodeo," "Some Assembly Required," "Fancy Free," and "Variations on 'America.'" . . . ¶ July 5 at 8: "La Bayadère, Act II," a selection of pas de deux, and "Theme and Variations." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Pilobolus—The athletic Vermont troupe opens its monthlong season of new works and such repertory offerings as "Pyramid of the Moon" and "Walklyndon." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 2-3 and July 7-8 at 8, July 4 at 2, and July 5 at 2 and 8. Through July 20.)

Noche Flamenca—Martin Santangelo and Soledad Barrios, a husband-and-wife team, are the anchors of this eight-member troupe of dancers, singers, and guitarists, and they bring to the passionate vocabulary of flamenco (the proud carriage, flashing hands, declarative boot work, intensely focussed gazes) unexpectedly tender nuances. This is their fourth summer at the intimate Theatre 80. (80 St. Marks Pl. 279-4200. July 2-5 and July 8 at 8, and July 6 at 3. Through Aug. 17.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—July 1-3 at 8, July 4 at 8:30, and July 5 at 2 and 8:30: Merce Cunningham Dance Company. . . . ¶ July 3-4 at 8:15, July 5 at 5, and July 6 at 7: Meredith Monk. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Dan Fogelberg—The enduring singer-songwriter, in an acoustic performance. (Westbury Music Fair. 516-334-0800. July 2 at 8.)

The Persuasions / The Harptones—The Brooklyn a-cappella group and the Harlem vocal outfit, in an open-air lunchtime concert. (MetroTech Commons, Flatbush Ave. at Myrtle Ave., Brooklyn. July 3 at noon. No tickets necessary.)

"Further Festival"—A Grateful Dead-inspired gig, featuring the Black Crowes, who were once a younger, feistier version of the Rolling Stones; former Dead members Bob Weir and Mickey Hart; solo keyboardist and erstwhile Dead sideman Bruce Hornsby; and American musical oddities Arlo Guthrie and Jorma Kaukonen. (Forest Hills Tennis Stadium, Flushing Meadows. 212-307-7171. July 3; gates open at 3.)

Me'Shell Ndegéocello—A seventies-channelling dynamo whose songs are always in the key of life: she elegantly fuses R. & B., funk, and pop the way Stevie Wonder used to. With singer Sandra St. Victor. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. July 4 at 3.)

"Gershwins' America with Frank Sinatra, Jr., and His Orchestra"—An Independence Day celebration. (The lawn in Battery Park. July 4 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

The Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra with Dave Valentin—The Latin-jazz flutist sits in on a program ranging from Aaron Copland to Astor Piazzola. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Brooklyn. No tickets necessary. July 4 at 7:30.)

Tuatara—An indie-rock instrumental supergroup featuring members of R.E.M. and Screaming Trees. With the eminently danceable *bhangra* of Punjabi by Nature. (Central Park SummerStage. No tickets necessary. July 5 at 3.)

"House of Blues Smokin' Grooves Tour"—Do they make portable air-conditioners? You'll need one for this show, which brings together three top rap acts in the Roots, the Pharcyde, and Cypress Hill; two dangerous divas in Erykah Badu and Foxy Brown; and one incomparable, indefatigable George Clinton, with the P-Funk All-Stars. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. July 5 at 7.)

Dark Latin Groove—Salsa served up with sides of reggae and rap. With the Cuban *charanga* arrangements of Johnny Almendra y los Jovenes del Barrio. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Brooklyn. No tickets necessary. July 5 at 7:30.)

Transglobal Underground / Afro Celt Sound System—The British collective blends Indian- and Arab-inspired melodies with hip-hop beats, violins, and electronica noodling. The Sound System brings together Irish, French, Scottish, and Senegalese musicians, who stir up a brew that's equal parts dance and trance. D.j. Bally Sagoo, a leader of the London Asian underground, spins *bhangra* beats before and between the shows. (Central Park SummerStage. No tickets necessary. July 6 at 3.)

Blackstreet—The young R. & B. kings led by the father of New Jack Swing, writer-producer Teddy Riley. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 8 at 8.)

"Carnegie Hall Celebrates the Music of Nat King Cole"—Yes, Cole was a majestic singer, but he was also a subtly spectacular jazz pianist, an attainment too often forgotten when it's tribute time. Saluting the unforgettable one in song will be Carol Sloane, Buddy Greco, Ruth Brown, Mark Murphy, Abbey Lincoln, John Pizzarelli, Annie Ross, Weslia Whitfield, the New York Voices, and Jon Hendricks. Giving the nod to Cole's keyboard prowess will be Monty Alexander, Diana Krall, and Nat's brother, Freddy Cole, each of whom also sings, and, on the 8th only, Tommy Flanagan, the dean of jazz pianists. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. July 8-9 at 7:30.)

Lyle Lovett—The wry, dapper Texan with the ten-gallon haircut has spent the past few years in tabloid hell. Now he's returned to his original incarnation, a wonderfully strange singer-songwriter. His live shows are fun; they're also surprisingly emotional. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. July 8 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Arlene Grocery, 95 Stanton St., between Ludlow and Orchard Sts. (358-1633)—A narrow, dimly lit, renovated bodega that's the perfect generic environment for three to five unknown bands each night trying to escape obscurity. The energy generated has drawn a lot of higher-profile acts down to check out the scene and (sometimes) play unannounced gigs. Recently spotted: David Byrne, Joan Osborne, and David Bowie.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The **BAD LIVERS** (July 5) make your feet move and your jaw drop with their rocking, nearly hardcore brand of bluegrass.

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—July 5: In the early eighties, when punk and New Wave were losing their flavor and the airwaves were saturated with synth-pop and heavy metal, a few bands started playing vintage Vox guitars and Farfisa organs, wearing Beatle boots, and singing about the big issues—cars and beer and, of course, girls. The garage revival was short-lived, but the **LYRES,** one of the genre's ablest practitioners, are still around, and they'll prove that in the right hands a good riff, a solid beat, and sneering, adenoidal vocals are never tiresome.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving.

Chez Es Saada, 42 E. 1st St. (777-5617)—On the ground floor of the old technical school here is a pretty café; traipse through and you reach the top of an improbably grand tiled staircase; descend and you find a basement transformed by scattered rose petals and golden light into the secret Tangier of Burroughs and Bowles. Waitresses in gold Badgley Mischka uniforms serve North African-flavored bistro fare throughout, and d.j.s play everything from nineteen-fifties Egyptian 45s to up-to-the minute Moroccan *chaiba* dance music. But the greatest pleasure is the elegant "retiring room," where you can slouch on a hassock and sip a vintage cocktail. For all the glamour, though, the owners are determined to maintain a neighborhood atmosphere, easygoing and friendly.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—July 3: **JUNIOR WELLS,** the Hoodoo Man himself, is back in town. The art of the amplified blues harmonica, cultivated on Chicago's fertile ground, has had only a handful of grand masters—Sonny Boy Williamson, Little Walter, James Cotton—and Wells can proudly count himself among them. Fondly remembered for his rambunctious partnership with Buddy Guy in the sixties and seventies, he's been a house-rocking performer for many years. July 4-5: Lowdown guitar prodigy **"MONSTER" MIKE WELCH** just graduated from high school, turned eighteen, and embarked on a summer tour (his second); he matriculates this fall at Berkeley. Talk about applying yourself.

Coney Island High, 15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959)—July 4: **THE JOEY RAMONE 4TH OF JULY EXTRAVAGANZA,** with Dee Dee Ramone, the Independents, Killer Kowalski, and the Dictators.

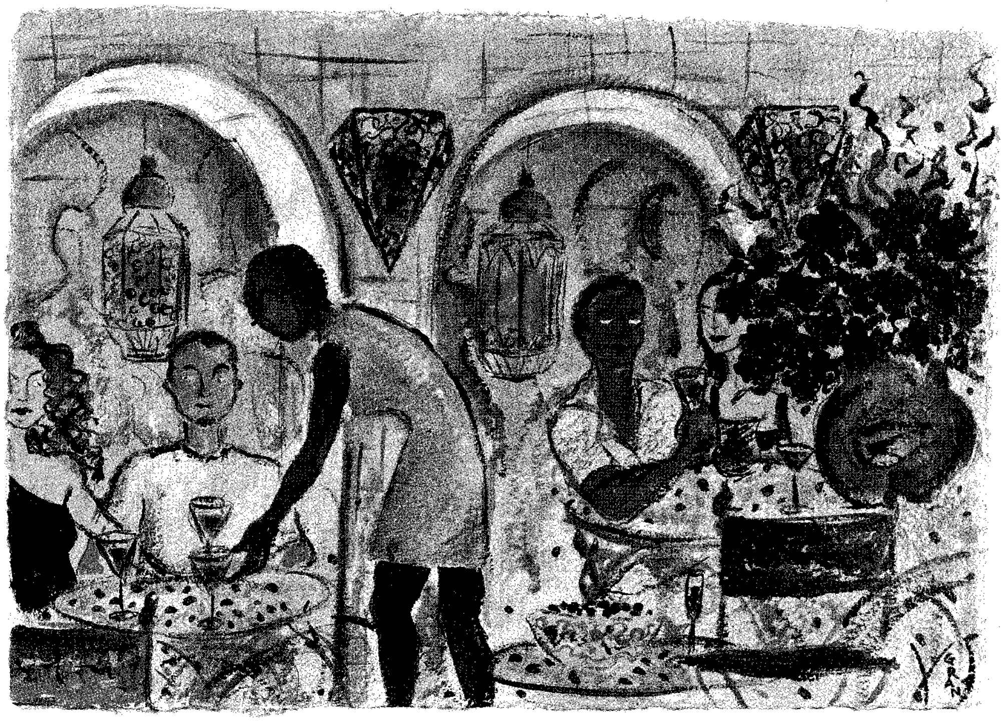
Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. July 2: **ISSAC DELGADO AND HIS ORCHESTRA.** The acclaimed thirty-five-year-old singer is on his first extended tour outside Cuba. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—The atmospheric indie noodling of **BAILTER SPACE** is on tap July 4.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—July 4: California indie singer-songwriter **BARBARA MANNING.** July 8: **FAMILY OF GOD.**

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, and a horse trailer has been converted into a bar. It's just about the best free house in town. July 2: New York-via-Oklahoma songwriter **BRUCE HENDERSON,** who used to front the High Plains Drifters with G. E. Smith. July 4: On-the-threshold Texas honky-tonker **WAYNE (THE TRAIN) HANCOCK** cranks out what some folks are calling "alternabilly."



Casbah caveaux: Relaxing at Chez Es Saada, in the East Village.

ELIZA GRAN

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. On July 6, **AFRO CELT SOUND SYSTEM** bounds over from Central Park (see Concerts). Dining.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Young baritone crooner **TOM POSTILIO** is in the midst of his Oak Room début. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and Johnny Parker, Fridays and Saturdays to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—The legendary club has a new address and bigger digs. July 2: **RON AFFIF,** a young guitarist with flying fingers and a heart filled with bebop, brings in his trio. July 4-6: "Buddy's Buddies," a tribute to Buddy Rich led by saxophonist **STEVE MARCUS.** July 8-9: Drummer **CARL ALLEN** juices up a band from the first note; his quintet this time around includes the loquacious Memphis pianist **MULGREW MILLER** and the talented young guitarist **MARK WHITFIELD.** Mondays are reserved for the **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI JAZZ ORCHESTRA,** which features the bandleader's husband, flutist and saxophonist **LEW TABACKIN.** Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. Through July 6: For decades, **LARRY CARLTON** was best known as the preëminent session guitarist: he could be heard on everything from Steely Dan records to TV theme songs. A few years back, he suffered nerve damage from a gunshot wound, which nearly ended his career. After extensive rehab, he's back, and he now plays with an evangelical fire. Starting July 8: The uncompromising vocalist **BETTY CARTER** and her trio. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is dark for the summer, but across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano through Aug. 2.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through July 6: You can almost hear the grass on the savanna rustle as South African expatriate **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM** stirs up a lolling piano vamp; his trio rides its undulating rhythms expertly. Groove reigns here rather than technique—a welcome turn of events in jazz. From July 7: The **JACKIE MC LEAN** quintet. Mondays belong to national treasure **LES PAUL.**

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 6 brings an evening of improv with **JOHN ZORN** and friends.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. On July 8, pianist and vocalist **STEVE ROSS** opens "I Won't Dance," a show of songs popularized by Fred Astaire. Among the accompanying performers are

ALTERNASUSHI

Manhattan's traditional sushi bars are mostly in midtown. Farther south you find a change in the climate (the target clientele definitely isn't Japanese businessmen) but not in the quality. Japanese epicures care intensely about the starch-to-fish ratio, the precise texture and temperature of the rice; New Yorkers are more interested in choice, comfort, value, and lighting—nothing too fluorescent, please. Unfortunately, only three of these hip and very popular maki makers accept reservations. Wear standing shoes: your line awaits.

SUSHI
寿司
すし
松
TAKESHI

TAKESHI TADATSU

Avenue A, 103 Avenue A, at 7th St. (982-8109)—An East Village joint whose busy décor and busier soundtrack make it ideal for taciturn dates and sufferers from attention-deficit disorder. The matte-black walls frame black-light fixtures, Bollywood-cum-Kama Sutra art work, and TVs showing "Saturday Night Fever" and Japanese soap-powder ads; the d.j. spins the Beatles, then Tricky, then the James Bond theme. The waitress (thin, with pigtails and a pierced lip) brings out a Crazy Roll (egg, scallion, shrimp, whitefish, and *tobiko*, or flying-fish roe, the whole thing fried tempura-style), a Bonsai Tree (cucumber-wrapped crab stick and *tobiko*), a far better than expected Dragon Roll (avocado-covered eel and *tobiko*). Afterward, you smoke, drink many Martinis, and prep your eardrums for Brownies or the Notell Motel up on the next block. (Open daily for dinner. Reservations accepted Sundays through Thursdays.)

Takahachi, 85 Avenue A, between 5th and 6th Sts. (505-6524)—This place has been serving some of the best downtown sushi since Avenue A was louche. The selection isn't the widest, but the standards are reliable—no fatty eel, no brown tuna, no flabby salmon; the crab (in both the wonderful, tricorne-shaped shumai and the California roll) is always fresh white meat, never the extruded "stick." Phobics of raw fish can sup on little skewers of barbecued vegetables or on a handsome teriyaki. The look is chunky pine tables and a calligraphic motif or two lit by a flood of wattage, but never mind—lingering is rude when there's a line for your table. (Open daily for dinner.)

Hasaki, 210 E. 9th St. (473-3327)—It boasts a three-table back yard and maki that haunt dreams, like the *kinota*-eel appetizer (eel wrapped in cucumber instead of the usual nori) and the special *hamachi* roll (inside-out yellowtail and burdock root with a smelt-roe coat, a full two inches in diameter). Hasaki subtly tweaks many dishes—the shumai here are solid little spheres coated with hairdo-like strings of noodle, and the spinach appetizer is prettily encased in cylinders of nori. Secure the red bench outside and you can press your nose to the plate-glass window like the Little Match Girl while you wait for a table. (Open daily for dinner.)

Iso, 175 Second Ave., at 11th St. (777-0361)—Eating at this East Villager is like dining inside an eighties bento box, thanks to the three tidy ranks of black lacquered tables, the restaurant's own personal Keith Haring logo (which is even printed on the chopstick wrappers), the spotlit pink walls, and the thoroughly bleached and typically black-clad waiters. The chef's special sushi is the way to go—a generous ten pieces, with an inside-out, *tobiko*-coated California roll, arranged on a china plate. For some reason, the place has an unusually chatty line. (Open Mondays through Saturdays for dinner.)

Blue Ribbon Sushi, 119 Sullivan St. (343-0404)—Ask nicely and they'll call your number from the bar at Blue Ribbon, the late-night sister seafood restaurant down the block. This restaurant's popularity derives partly from the surprising dearth of sushi in SoHo, partly from the length of the sushi list (adventurously divided into oceans Pacific and Atlantic, and starring raw lobster), and partly, of course, from the sea creatures' blue-ribbon quality. The interior is also less glaringly fluorescent than the norm, and all but pitch-dark in the stone-walled smoking room. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays for dinner.)

Taka, 61 Grove St., at Bleecker St. (242-3699)—Conventional wisdom has it that female hands are too warm and spoil the fish; Taka, the chef and owner of this West Village spot, proves otherwise. Not only does she produce splendid sushi, she also arranges it artfully on ceramic dishes of her own design and make: little saucers for the low-sodium soy she offers, asymmetrical obsidian trays, and artfully spatter-glazed platters. Stacked together on shelves behind the sushi bar, they provide some visual delight in an otherwise bland (and very tiny) room. Another visual delight is Taka's pretty maki—creations so delicious they might lead you to suspect that handling clay cools the blood. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays for dinner. Reservations accepted for the sushi bar only. Closed for vacation through July 14.)

Yama, 122 E. 17th St. (475-0969)—The dominatrix of the Yama queue wields her notebook as if it were a crucifix to ward off vampires. "No. 73? Wait two hour," she deadpans. If the line is hell, then the tiny lobby is purgatory: mountains of fish are whooshed past drooling mouths; the clock, with sushi for numbers (salmon roe at twelve), records the eternal wait. What is the secret of Yama's amazing popularity? Location? (Corner of Irving Place.) Fish? (Somewhat sinewy.) Interior? (Compact, white, too bright.) No, it's that Yama does sushi Americana: megamaki, sashimi as big as the Ritz. Beforehand, you're dying of hunger. Eventually, you stagger sated out into the night. (Open weekdays for lunch, weekdays and Saturdays for dinner.)

The Sushi Bar, 256 E. 49th St. (644-8750)—A downtown club that got lost and landed on a quiet midtown block, though you wouldn't note that ambience if you stayed on the unremarkable first floor, ordering the best shumai in town (big, basket-shaped crab dumplings), lobster tempura, and a *toro* (fatty tuna)-scallion roll. Up one flight, where the light level drops, the walls are zebra-striped and cigarettes are de rigueur. The fine *kanpachi* (yellowtail) and *uni* (sea urchin) compete with weirder entries, like *kamo* (duck breast), *gyu-tataki* (seared steak), and *tonburi* ("vegetable caviar"). You can order such exotica as an SOS-SOS (steamed ocean sea bass with scallion-oyster sauce) or a Fillet o' Fluke roll (on a board Jackson Pollocked with several discrete spicy-mayonnaise sauces), and even an espresso-sake malted milk ("Japanese tiramisu") for dessert. Climb yet another flight and you reach the first of two brothel-like floors of refrigerated private karaoke lounges, each containing a giant TV, a tambourine, microphones, and three menus: Japanese hits, English hits, and food. Don't come on a school night—you can get lost up here for hours. (Open weekdays for lunch, weekdays and Saturdays for dinner; karaoke floors open Sundays as well. Reservations accepted.)

pianist Bruno Casolari and vocalist Karen Murphy. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night. July 2: The **SAM YAHEL ORGAN QUARTET,** featuring **RYAN KISOR** and **ERIC ALEXANDER.** Yahel mans the instrument that refuses to say die—the electric organ. Together with brisk trumpeter Kisor and saxophonist Alexander, he makes sure that the great jazz-blues-funk mélange of the sixties is with us still. July 4-5: The **CHRIS ANDERSON/RONI BEN-HUR** quartet. With only a handful of recordings and just a few appearances over the course of a forty-year career, pianist Anderson safely qualifies as a legend. His lyrical bop rings with eccentricity and experience, and it has the cleansing power of authenticity. For much of the nineties, he's teamed up, as here, with Israeli guitarist Ben-Hur. July 8: The **CHARLES OWENS** quartet.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. July 1-6: Not only is **JUNKO ONISHI** the best female Japanese bop pianist since Toshiko Akiyoshi, she's already moved far beyond the strictures of her atypical jazz identity. Her recent jabbing repartee with Jackie McLean (who starts at Iridium July 7) kept the veteran saxophonist on his toes, while her own recordings display quick reflexes, a strong melodic sense, and unstoppable swing. Dining.

Village Gate, 240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252)—July 3-5: Alto saxophonist **RICHIE COLE** has peppered his career with happy bebop renditions of "Come Fly with Me," "Hooray for Hollywood," "La Bamba," and the themes from "I Love Lucy" and "Star Trek."

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks and feels like a classic jazz club: subterranean and thick with the spirits of past masters. Through July 6: Everyone loves Louis Armstrong, but **LEROY JONES** takes the prize. Still, this vibrant traditionalist trumpeter remains his own man when it comes to the verities of direct communication. Starting July 8: The **BILL FRISELL** trio. Frisell plays guitar like Miles Davis played trumpet: in the hands of such radical thinkers, their instruments simply become different animals. And, like Davis at his best, Frisell loves to have a lot of legroom when he improvises—the space that terrifies others quickens his blood. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. July 2-4: The **KEVIN EUBANKS** quartet. It can't be easy making your living schmoozing with Jay Leno, but guitarist Eubanks seems to be handling his big-money gig with more poise than Branford Marsalis did. Eubanks tests himself periodically by returning to his home town and letting the tough crowd decide whether the good life has eroded his prodigious chops. July 5-6: The **GUST W. TSILIS** quintet. The **MARIA SCHNEIDER ORCHESTRA** is now in its third year of Monday nights here; the composer and arranger's big band has settled nicely into institutional status.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Through July 5: Pianist **MIKE LE DONNE** may be a sterling sideman, but he's not to be dismissed as anyone's second banana. For his part, the dependable **BOB CRANSHAW** transcends dependability when he ditches his electric bass and confines himself to an unplugged instrument, which he presumably will on this alcove of a bandstand. The sturdy drummer is **JOE FARNSWORTH.** Dining.

ART

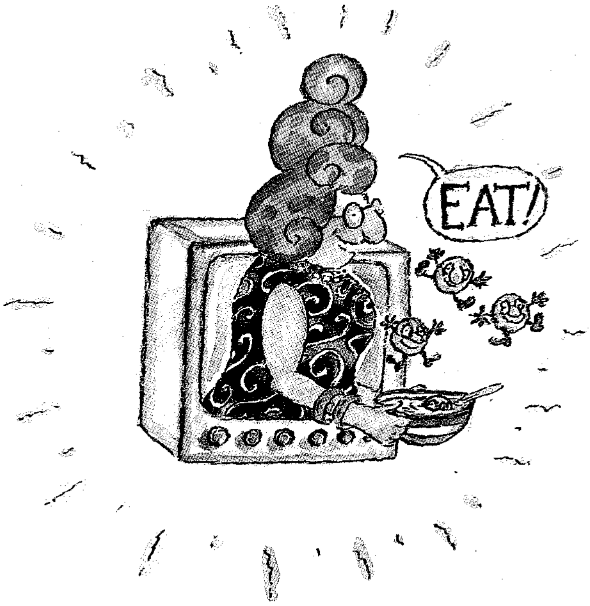
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"The Glory of Byzantium" is the museum's most spectacular exhibition in years, a colossal exploration of the art, history, and thought of what is known as the Second Golden Age of Byzantium, an era of unsurpassed imperial opulence which lasted from the mid-ninth century to the thirteenth. Through July 6. . . . ¶ "Ivan Albright: Magic Realist," a centennial retrospective that includes paintings, watercolors, drawings, and lithographs by the American artist (1897-1983), whose clinically precise draftsmanship lent an eerie vitality to his treatment of decay. Through Sept. 7. . . . ¶ The museum's collection of Chinese art, one of the finest outside Asia, now has room to glow: after two years of construction, a new series of galleries nearly doubles the exhibition space. These cool, quiet rooms create the ideal atmosphere in which to grasp the rarefied sensibility of imperial Chinese painting, calligraphy, and decorative art. . . . ¶ "Indian Court Painting: Sixteenth-Nineteenth Century," a small exhibition that richly rewards a climb to the attic of the museum's South Asian department. A remarkable range of styles is in evidence, from a charming watercolor of a prince riding an elephant to a grisly, apocalyptic image of Devi, the Great Goddess, in a cremation field. Through July 6. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Objects of Desire: The Modern Still Life," an exhibition devoted to domestic arrangements, from Cézanne's apples to Warhol's Campbell's soup cans. Through Aug. 26. . . . ¶ Cindy Sherman's career began in the late seventies with her witty series of "Untitled Film Stills," sixty-nine black-and-white photographs in which she poses as the protagonist of a variety of noir films: the starlet standing in the door of her motel room, clutching a Martini; the sex kitten splayed on a bed, wearing a clingy silk slip; the smartly dressed career girl dwarfed by the skyscraper canyon of lower Manhattan. Sherman helped pioneer the exploration of the no man's land between high and low: the source of her imagery isn't Hollywood B movies per se but rather the highly intellectualized reinvention of the genre by such European filmmakers as Visconti and Antonioni. Her blond bombshell isn't Jayne Mansfield; she's Monica Vitti deconstructing Jayne Mansfield, and that's a big difference—the difference between camp and irony. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Paris/The 1890s" examines the fin-de-siècle printmaking of Bonnard, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard, and others. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Stenberg Brothers: Constructing a Revolution in Soviet Design," an excellent summer show of Constructivist film posters. Vladimir and Georgii Stenberg actually achieved in their energetic and vibrantly colored work the unity of formal innovation and mass appeal that the Russian avant-garde aspired to. Though they did posters for Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov, in many other cases it is the posters, not the films they advertised, that have lasted. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "More Than One: Twentieth Century Print Portfolios." Through Sept. 2. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, except July 3, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30. Open July 3, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"From Dürer to Rauschenberg: A Quintessence of Drawing." A coöperative venture with Vienna's Albertina Graphics Collection presents masterpieces of draftsmanship, from finished portraits to sketchbook whimsies, by seventeen artists, including Raphael, Rembrandt, Fragonard, Kandinsky, and Beuys. Through Aug. 24. . . . ¶ Large-scale sculpture by the Basque minimalist Cristina Iglesias, who favors forthright urban materials—concrete, iron, glass, etc.—and delicately etched surfaces. Through Sept 7. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"Keith Haring." Everybody loves Haring, but he was, in fact, human—a circumstance that seems to have eluded the creators of this breathless beatification posing as a retrospective. There are a few paintings here and there, but most of the space is given over to something reminiscent of the way the Germans restore their great composers' homes: one is permitted to gaze upon (among many other items) the artist's Monkees Fan Club card, his sneakers, his collection of cassettes, his wallet, his cancelled passport. Does it really add to our understanding of Haring's work to see his bill from Mr. Chow? The show is a lavishly designed multimedia extravaganza—meaning there's a video blasting away in nearly every gallery. In one room, a big hole has been ripped out of the wall, and a specially made dance mix, by d.j. Junior Vasquez, plays loudly as a pile of little monitors shows an amateur videotape of the closing night of the Paradise Garage. You had to be there. Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ "Frank Lloyd Wright: Designs for an American Landscape, 1922-32," a meticulously curated exhibition of drawings and exquisitely finished architectural models for five utopian resort projects that the Master envisioned for the American wilderness but that were never built. Through Aug. 31. . . . ¶ "Collection in Context: Rockwell Kent by Night." Through Sept. 14. . . . ¶ Twenty-five photographs by Larry Fink, of boxers and their camp followers. Through Sept. 7. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)



"Chicken Soup and Wontons: Jews and Food on American Television," at the Jewish Museum.

VICTORIA ROBERTS

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs." Fossils, time lines, and a re-creation of a paleontological dig, displayed in the shadow of a seventy-foot-long reconstruction of a mamenchisaurus. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Process on Paper: Recent Acquisitions." Prints (Lyonel Feininger, Louise Bourgeois, Vito Acconci), drawings (John Singer Sargent, Kiki Smith), and photographs (Roy De Carava, Lorna Simpson) demonstrate the technical range of works on paper. Through Sept. 28. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5, and Saturday evenings until 9.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—The seventy-five photographs in "Picturing Hong Kong: Photography 1855-1910" open a window onto one of the most fascinating places on earth. The first image—a panoramic view of the harbor in 1860, crowded with British frigates preparing to fight in the second Opium War—tells you more about the background of what's happening there this week than all the commentary on the news channels and op-ed pages combined. Many of the portraits and scenes of everyday life were produced as tourist souvenirs; other images (for example, twelve decapitated pirates from Kowloon, their heads neatly set beside them on the beach) have the graphic immediacy of classic photojournalism. The exceptional quality and condition of the prints make the show required viewing for anyone interested in nineteenth-century photography. Through Aug. 17. . . . ¶ "Gods, Kings, and Tigers," a magnificent display of court paintings, drawings, and regalia, lent by the royal family of Kotah, a Hindu principality (until India achieved nationhood, fifty years ago) near Jaipur. The paintings radiate vigor—scenes of martial pageantry, of the god Krishna entertaining his myriad lovers, of princes hunting and hawking. Through July 20. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700)—"The Proud Republic: Dutch Medals of the Golden Age." More than forty examples of seventeenth-century work, predominantly in high relief, with full-face and three-quarter-view portraits—of Cromwell, Joost van den Vondel, Maarten Tromp, and their ilk—and reverse scenes of sea battles and cityscapes and allegorical tableaux. Through July 27. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6. Closed July 4.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155)—"Enlightenment Embodied: The Art of the Japanese Buddhist Sculptor." To inaugurate its exquisitely redesigned galleries, and to celebrate its ninetieth anniversary, the society has assembled a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition of Japanese Buddhist sculptures, ranging from a tiny, naïve bronze of the infant Siddhartha to a life-size thirteenth-century polychrome wood carving of the reclining Buddha at the point of death. In addition to objects borrowed from museums, the exhibit includes several images removed from temples where they've been enshrined for centuries; priests in Japan dislodged the statues' "souls" before their journey to foreign shores and will resanctify them after their return home. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Mondays and July 4, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—"Points of Entry," three photography exhibitions ("A Nation of Strangers," "Reframing America," and "Tracing Cultures") exploring immigration. Through Aug. 17. . . . ¶ "Chicken Soup and Wontons: Jews and Food on American Television," a video installation, with television footage drawn from the National Jewish Archive of Broadcasting, considers Jewish cooking and Jewish stereotypes, from "The Goldbergs" to "The Nanny." Through Sept. 28. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St. (977-7170)—"A Passion for the Past: The Collection of Bertram K. and Nina Fletcher Little" offers eighteenth- and nineteenth-century portraits, landscapes, and everyday objects (hooked rugs, decoys, blanket chests, case clocks) from rural New England. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"Visionary Daughters of Albion: A Bicentenary Celebration of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley" revisits the papers, publications, and personal effects of the mother and daughter, authors of "The Vindication of the Rights of Woman" and "Frankenstein," respectively. Salomon Room; through Sept. 13. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6. Closed July 4.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Summer hours: unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Most are closed July 3-6; it is advisable to call ahead.)

Joaquín Torres-García (1874-1949)—An ample, well-mounted survey of works in many mediums by the Uruguayan artist and writer of manifestos, who at various stages espoused virtually every major style of modernism. The strongest works are abstract paintings in the geometric style of Mondrian, rendered with funky, Expressionist élan, and grids of symbols in the faux-naïve style of Paul Klee, which resemble hieroglyphic telegrams from a Middle Kingdom scribe living on the Left Bank between the wars. Through July 30. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. 755-7288.)

"The True Poetry: The Art of María Izquierdo"—Much of the drama of twentieth-century Latin-American art lies in the collision of avant-gardism with an exotic (to North American eyes, at least) traditionalism. Like her contemporaries Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, the painter María Izquierdo mined the exorbitant and bloody dream world of Mexican life for images that resonated with the power of European Surrealism. She never achieved the renown of the Mexican muralists, much less Kahlo's cult status, but, as this show amply demonstrates, she was very much in tune with her time. The exhibition is strong in her portraits; some of her de Chiricoesque street scenes and landscapes have a lurid, almost campy appeal. Through July 27. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Open daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

Short List—**morris graves,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122. Through July 31. . . . **whitfield lovell,** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through July 11. . . . **charles seliger,** Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082. Through Aug. 20. . . . **peter waite,** Winston Wächter, 111 E. 65th St. 327-2526. Through July 11.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

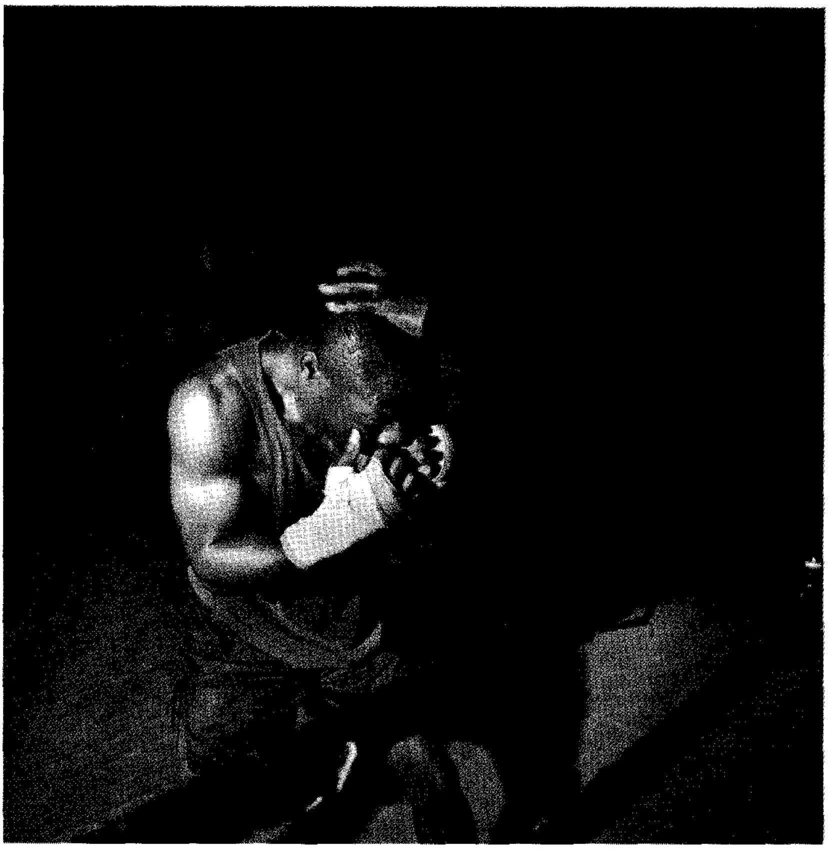
"Margins"—A modest but intelligent group show featuring Conceptualist photo/text works by Sol LeWitt, Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, and Vito Acconci. The highlight: a photo documenting Matta-Clark's most ambitious project, "Splitting" (1974), in which the artist literally cut a wooden house in two. Through July 30. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

Group Show—A rewarding, agendaless exhibition of sculptures by Lynda Benglis, photographs by Adam Fuss, drawings by Serge Spitzer, and paintings by David Salle. What the works share historically or conceptually is not the issue—they simply look great together. The two early paintings by Salle stand out. Through July 31. (Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727.)

Short List—**lawrence anderson** and **eric willmer,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Open Wednesdays through Sundays; both shows through July 20. . . . **tom baldwin,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Closed Mondays; through July 31. . . . **lucio pozzi and steve currie,** Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. Through July 25. . . . **frank lloyd wright,** Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 633-6999. Through July 31.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Sol LeWitt / Frank Gehry—Large-scale wall drawings, most of them variations on the combination of matte and glossy blacks, by one of the founders of Conceptual art. They perfectly illustrate the Conceptualist tenet that the work need not be executed by the artist, or executed at all: LeWitt's drawings exist as simple instructions to be carried out by other hands. At the same time, their visual punch and grandeur completely demolish the notion that Conceptual works are perforce dry and anemic. / Models of the architect's plans for One Times Square. Both shows through Aug. 15. (Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599.)



"Champs Gym, Philadelphia, PA," by Larry Fink, at the Whitney Museum of American Art (also at Richardson).

Short List—**hans accola** and **douglas kolk,** Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074. Both shows through Aug. 1. . . . **conrad atkinson,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232. Through July 11. . . . **peter nagy,** Klagsbrun, 80 Mercer St. 925-5157. Through July 18. . . . **donna rosenthal,** Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. 431-4224. Closed Mondays, open Saturdays; through July 12. . . . **denyse thomasos,** Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012. Through July 25.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lillian Bassman—A retrospective of vintage fashion photographs from the forties through the sixties. Starts July 2. Through Aug. 1. (Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ A larger retrospective of fashion work and personal projects runs through Aug. 16 at the Fashion Institute of Technology. (Seventh Ave. at 27th St. 217-5800. Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

George Daniell—Street images of New York City from the thirties and forties. Through Aug. 1. (Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Larry Fink—Pictures from the worlds of boxing, fashion, politics, and Wall Street. Starts July 2. Through Aug. 29. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.) . . . ¶ A show of the artist's boxing photographs is at the Whitney Museum, through Sept. 7.

Marc Riboud—The first New York gallery show of the globe-trotting French photojournalist (he once drove a used Land Rover from London to Calcutta) features vintage prints of scenes from Vietnam, Iran, the Soviet Union, China, Africa, and the United States. Starts July 2. Through Aug. 1. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010.) . . . ¶ A large show of Riboud's photographs made in China over the past forty years runs through Sept. 14 at the International Center of Photography. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

"Adolescents"—Inscrutable youth, by Sander, Arbus, Disfarmer, Ross, and others. Starts July 2. Through Aug. 15. (Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Closed Mondays.)

"Backyards"—The domestic comedy, by, among others, William Eggleston, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Susan Lipper, Richard Misrach, Walter Rosenblum, and Garry Winogrand. Starts July 3. Through Aug. 15. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223.)

"Image"—A great grab bag of work by such artists as Bernd and Hilla Becher, Jan Groover, Sally Mann, Gerhard Richter, Sandy Skoglund, Hiroshi Sugimoto, and James Welling. Through July 25. (Fung, 537 Broadway. 334-6242. Opens at noon; closed Mondays.)

"The Insistent Image III" / Larry Colwell (1901-1972)—The Danziger gallery's annual group show of recent acquisitions includes works by Cameron, Cunningham, Weston, and Leibovitz. /Nudes from the forties and fifties by the Northern California photographer. Both shows through July 31. (130 Prince St. 226-0056. Closed Mondays.)

"Water"—This summer's obligatory H_2O-fest looks mighty refreshing, with works on hand by William Henry Fox Talbot, August Sander, Robert Adams, Harry Callahan, Sally Mann, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Emmet Gowin, and Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Through Aug. 29. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Closes Fridays at 4.)

Short List—**marilyn bridges,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through July 31. . . . **marianne courville,** Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766. Starts July 8; through Aug. 15. . . . **erich hartmann,** Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Closed Mondays, opens Saturdays at noon; through Aug. 9.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Asia Society, and the Jewish Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

New York Grand Opera—The company opens the fourth season of its survey of Verdi's twenty-eight operas with a staged production of "I Masnadieri," in what might be considered a sesquicentennial salute. Verdi's eleventh opera confirmed the composer's international success: it was commissioned (for a considerable sum) by Her Majesty's Theatre, London, which mounted the première, on July 11, 1847; it was written for a distinguished cast that included the soprano Jenny Lind (the "Swedish Nightingale") and the legendary bass Luigi Lablache; and its opening night was witnessed by the cream of British society, including Queen Victoria and all the members of Parliament (whom she had commanded to attend in full dress). This performance features soprano Yoko Ojima, tenor Antonio Carangelo, baritone Raemond Martin, and bass Dominik Eberle. Vincent La Selva conducts. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 2 at 7:30. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 245-8837.)

Opera Nova—This new company hopes "to make opera a part of the mainstream of the Chelsea, Tribeca, Battery Park, SoHo, and West Village communities"—a tall order—and the ticket prices are low enough that nobody should feel excluded. The group's first production is Bellini's "La Sonnambula," fully staged, in an abridged version, sung in Italian but with English dialogue added to keep the proceedings clear. Susan McBee conducts the singers and a chamber ensemble. (Sanford Meisner Theatre, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. July 8 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 543-9662. Through July 13.)

ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," as well as Ornette Coleman's "Skies of America," for which the orchestra shares the stage for some ninety minutes with Coleman's jazz band, Prime Time. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. July 8-9 at 8.)

"Brahms on Broadway"—Trinity Church, whose midday concerts are largely funded by an anonymous gift offered "to the glory of God and in honor of Johannes Brahms," presents a ten-week summer series of music by that composer (Brahms, not God). In the opening concert, Richard Auldon Clark conducts the Manhattan Chamber Orchestra in the Piano Concerto No. 1, with Ruth Laredo as soloist. (Broadway at Wall St. July 3 at 1. Admission by contribution.)

Summergarden—This summer, the Museum of Modern Art's outdoor concerts, featuring advanced students and recent graduates of the Juilliard School, explore the work of forty-six twentieth-century composers who immigrated to the United States or, at least, established residence here. The series opens with pieces for chamber orchestra, conducted by Joel Sachs: "Intégrales," by Varèse (an arrival from France); "Sin Normas Ajenas," by Tania León (from Cuba); "Two Poems from the Sung Dynasty," by Bright Sheng (of Chinese origin); "Dodecaconcerto," by Roque Cordero (born in Panama); and "Conga Line in Hell," by Miguel del Aguila (an Uruguayan national whose music always merits a detour). (14 W. 54th St. July 4-5 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Washington Square Music Festival—Virko Baley leads the Festival Orchestra in his own Violin Concerto No. 1 and Saint-Saëns's "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso" (both featuring Tom Chiu), as well as Bernstein's "Candide" Overture and Schubert's Symphony No. 5. (Washington Square Park. July 8 at 8. No tickets necessary. In case of rain, the concerts will be held at New York University's Loeb Student Center Auditorium, 566 LaGuardia Pl.)

RECITALS

"Music in the Garden"—A month-long chamber-music series on the grounds of the Church of the Holy Trinity opens with a recital of Baroque music (by Handel, Bach, Vivaldi, and Corelli) performed by flutist Daniel Dorrance, violinist Hiroko Taguchi, and cellist Allen Alexander. (316 E. 88th St. July 2 at 7:15. Admission by contribution.)

Stelle Celeste—An early-music trio made up of soprano, viola da gamba, and harpsichord, performing Baroque music from France and England. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. July 2 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

Bargemusic—July 3 at 7:30 and July 6 at 4: Presenting Barber's Cello Sonata, in addition to string quartets by Kreisler and Beethoven (in C Major, Op. 59, No. 3). . . . ¶ July 4 at 7:30: Violinist Paul Rosenthal and pianist Doris Stevenson offer sonatas by Leclair and Beethoven (in G Major, Op. 30, No. 3), works by Bruch and Vieuxtemps, and Manuel Rosenthal's "American Bouquet" and "Bravura Variations on 'Alaska's Flag.'" (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

Lara St. John—The violinist performs two recitals, assisted by pianist Ilan Rechtman. July 6 at noon: Beethoven's Sonata No. 3, plus works by Franz Waxman and Mr. Rechtman. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478.) . . . ¶ July 7 at 8: Beethoven's Sonata No. 3, as well as Mr. Rechtman's "Czárdas Caprice" and several of his "Jazzicals" (with cellist Iris Regev assisting). (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. No tickets necessary.)

Yuri Kim—The pianist performs music by Schubert and Chopin (including his Scherzo No. 2). (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. July 6 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

Stephen Hamilton—Playing an hour-long recital of organ works by Kenton Coe, Messiaen, Widor, Pierre DuMage, and Vierne. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 8 at 7. Admission by contribution.)

OUT OF TOWN

Metropolitan Opera—The Met concludes its free outdoor concert performances with a pair of New Jersey appearances. July 3 at 8: "Carmen," with Ainhoa Arteta, Wendy White, Neil Rosenshein, and Jeffrey Wells; conducted by Yves Abel. (Buccleuch Park, New Brunswick.) . . . ¶ July 5 at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Pagliacci," with Stefka Evstatieva, Fabio Armiliato, and Frederick Burchinal in the former and Elizabeth Holleque, Vladimir Bogachov, Bruno Pola, and Mark Oswald in the latter; Christian Badea conducts both. (Cooper River Park, Pennsauken.) (For information about locations and rain dates, call 212-362-6000.)

Tanglewood—July 2 at 8:30: A historic event—violinist Robert Mann's final performance with the Juilliard String Quartet, in which he has served as first violinist ever since the group was founded, in 1946. After so many years in the same job, he can hardly be blamed for wanting a change of pace, but music lovers will feel a twang of regret as he passes the torch. In this concert, the foursome performs works by Beethoven that stand at the summit of musical literature: his Quartets in A Minor (Op. 132) and in B-Flat Major (Op. 130, with the "Grosse Fuge" attached.) . . . ¶ July 3 at 8:30: Following two weeks of prelude performances, Seiji Ozawa conducts the Boston Symphony in the official opening night of the season, an all-Strauss concert comprising his symphonic poem "Don Juan," five of his orchestral songs, his "Rosenkavalier" Suite, and the Intermezzo and Closing Scene from "Capriccio." Jessye Norman is the soprano. . . . ¶ July 4: The festival presents its traditional Independence Day celebration, with musical events popping up on the grounds beginning at 4, and with a concert by Lyle Lovett's band at 7:30. . . . ¶ July 5 at 8:30: Zdenek Macal and the Boston Symphony offer Brahms's "Schicksalslied" (with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus), Mozart's G-Major Piano Concerto (K. 453, with Garrick Ohlsson), and Brahms's Symphony No. 2. . . . ¶ July 6 at 2:30: John Williams and Mr. Ozawa take turns at the Boston Symphony's podium to lead music by Christopher Rouse ("Infernal Machine"), Barber (his Violin Concerto, with Gil Shaham), and Copland (including the "Canticle of Freedom" and "A Lincoln Portrait," the latter narrated by James Earl Jones). (Lenox, Mass. 413-637-1600.)

Caramoor—July 3 at 4:15: The Jacques Thibaud String Trio performs works by Schubert, Schoenberg, and Beethoven. . . . ¶ July 4 at 8:30: Chanteuse Andrea Marcovicci offers American pop standards. . . . ¶ July 5 at 8:30: Eleven members of the Orchestra of St. Luke's (without a conductor) offer eight concertos by Vivaldi. . . . ¶ July 6 at 5:30: The village of Katonah celebrates its centennial this year, and the festival (which has been one

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LISTENING BOOTH

Summer Sounds—A long summer weekend can benefit from music that doesn't take itself too seriously. For Independence Day, the choice new release is unquestionably **A TRIP TO CONEY ISLAND**, subtitled "Descriptive Overtures from America's Golden Age" (Dorian DIS-80153), on which George Foreman leads the New Columbian Brass Band in very minor masterpieces by very obscure composers of a century ago. The title track, a "serio-comic fantasia" by a certain Theodore Moses Tobani, is an amusing assemblage of quotations that add up to a sonic chronicle of a day spent travelling to the amusement park (via boat and train), weathering a thunderstorm, enjoying concerts and fireworks, and heading back to "Home Sweet Home." The disk's other programmatic overtures depict "A Young Man's Call on His Girl" (complete with osculatory sound effects), Christopher Columbus, the Battles of Shiloh and San Juan Hill, and—our favorite—"The Hunting of the Snark, an Epical Parody in Six Cantos," composed in 1903 by Thomas H. Rollinson.

The French, of course, are masters of the feather-light, and few composers have rivalled **EMMANUEL CHABRIER** (1841-94) in combining sophistication with buoyancy. A recent Chabrier disk on Deutsche Grammophon (447-751-2) assembles the winning combination of John Eliot Gardiner and the Vienna Philharmonic: the conductor expresses the elegant finesse the music calls for, and the players respond with their accustomed precision. The recording mixes familiar items (including "España" and the "Suite Pastorale") with pieces worthy of rediscovery—for example, an idyllic ten-minute Larghetto for solo French horn and orchestra and the long-ignored "Prélude Pastoral," which the composer apparently meant to be attached to the famously rowdy "Joyeuse Marche," as it is here.

The French composer **MANUEL ROSENTHAL** (born 1904) is better known as a conductor and arranger (of Offenbach's "Gaîté Parisienne," for example); nonetheless, his composition studies with Boulanger and Ravel left him with a brilliantly polished style that serves his impish wit to perfection. A new disk of five of his pieces for various chamber groupings (Calliope CAL 9894) is a whimsical delight from start (a rude, blowsy thing called "Saxophon' Marmalade") to finish ("Juventas," a minuscule chamber suite that sometimes sounds like Stravinsky on acid). Those with enough knowledge to savor the in-jokes will laugh the loudest.

FESTIVAL OF FRENCH MUSIC (Discovery DICD 920181) is another Francophile treat, a collection of folksy-modernist trios for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon, by Ibert, Françaix, Désiré Dondeyne, Henri Tomasi, Guy-Ropartz, and Canteloube (of "Chants d'Auvergne" fame—the three "Rustiques" here, from 1946, are in the same vein), performed by the Trio Avena of Belgium. Nothing to change your life, but just the thing for an hour stretched out in the hammock.

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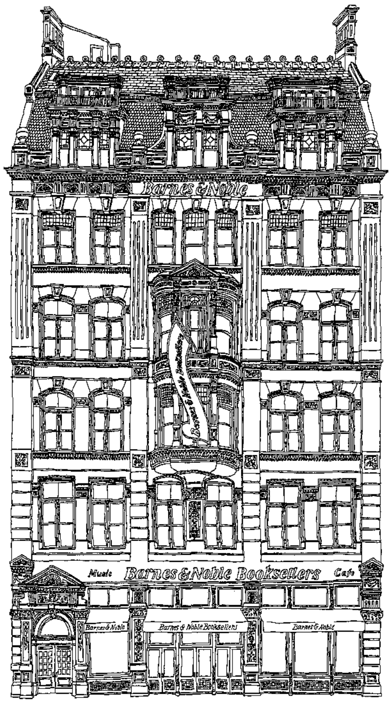

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of its prime attractions for more than half of that span) tips its hat with an old-style concert by the Empire State American Eagle Band, conducted by Mark Gould. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

Opera Festival of New Jersey—July 3 at 8 and July 6 at 2: "Faust." . . . ¶ July 5 at 8: "La Cenerentola," performed in English. (Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J. 609-279-1795.)

Glimmerglass Opera—Opening performances of the season, which continues through August 25. July 3 at 8 and July 6 at 2: "Madama Butterfly." . . . ¶ July 5 at 8 and July 7 at 2: Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride." (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

Music Mountain—The Miami String Quartet is featured in two separate programs. July 5 at 8: Quartets by Haydn (in G Major, Op. 76, No. 1) and Grieg (in G Minor, Op. 27), as well as Shostakovich's Piano Quintet (with Alan Chow assisting). . . . ¶ July 6 at 3: The foursome plays Hindemith's Third Quartet, and double-bassist Harold Robinson assists in Rossini's D-Major Duetto, for cello and double-bass, as well as in Dvořák's G-Major String Quintet (Op. 77). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126.)

Maverick Concerts—Violinist Charles Libove and pianist Nina Lugovoy perform sonatas by Mozart and Dohnányi, and colleagues assist them in Brahms's A-Major Piano Quartet and Schubert's B-Flat-Major String Trio (D. 471). (Woodstock, N.Y. 914-679-8217. July 6 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Dark as Night—To this day, unexploded depth charges from the Second World War lie beneath the waters off the East Coast, remnants of the lethal greetings left for any German U-boats that crept up to our shores; since then, the German Navy has kept its submersibles on its side of the Atlantic. This weekend, however, the Intrepid Sea Air Space Museum welcomes a pair of German submarines to New York Harbor. The two diesel-powered, hundred-and-sixty-foot-long subs, which call the North German port city of Kiel home, usually patrol the Baltic Sea, but from July 4 through July 6, from 1 to 5, they'll be berthed here and open to curious visitors free of charge. (Pier 86, Twelfth Ave. at 46th St. For more information, call 245-0072.)

Bright as Day—What would the Fourth of July be without fireworks? Fortunately, New Yorkers never have to address that dark question. For the twenty-first straight year, Macy's will turn the night sky above the East River into a Technicolor wonder: starting at 9, more than fifteen thousand shells, weighing a total of forty thousand pounds, will rocket upward as high as a thousand feet. A prime viewing spot is the F.D.R. Drive, which will be closed to traffic between 14th and 42nd Streets from 7 P.M. to 1 A.M.

Talk—July 8 at 7:30: Brian Lamb, the founder of C-Span and host of that network's "Booknotes," fields questions on his life and work from writers Stanley Crouch, Pete Hamill, and David Halberstam. (Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. No tickets necessary.)

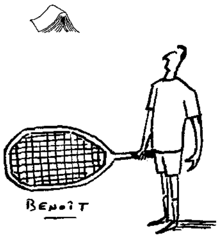
Readings—July 2 at 7: Donna Masini reads from her novel, "About Yvonne," and Helen Schulman reads from her own fiction. (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 8 at 7: Klaus Kertess, the curator who put together the 1995 Whitney Biennial, reads from his collection of short fiction, "South Brooklyn Casket Company." (A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. No tickets necessary.)

Walk—July 4 at noon: Adventure on a Shoestring offers a tour of Revolutionary War sites, including the Commons (now City Hall Park), where, on July 9, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was first read in public. For more information, call 265-2663.

BOOK CURRENTS

Tennis, anyone?

Now that the Wimbledon Tennis Championships have begun, tennis courts everywhere are bustling with people eagerly trying to replicate the athletic miracles they've seen on TV. Others, less brave, will just read about the game. According to the tennis scholar Heiner Gillmeister, of the University of Bonn, the game has engaged the literary imagination since the Renaissance. Budding academics can seek out the brief description of tennis in Castiglione's **Il Cortegiano** or the famous "Tennis balls, my liege" scene in Shakespeare's **Henry V**. Of course, tennis in those days was, as Harry Marmion, president of the U.S. Tennis Association puts it, "a very different ball game." For a contemporary overview of the sport, he prefers **Bud Collins' Tennis Encyclopedia** and E. Digby Baltzell's **Sporting Gentlemen**.



"There's a passage in Nabokov's **Transparent Things** where the main character has developed a new kind of tennis shot, hit with such underspin that the ball doesn't bounce when it lands," Martin Amis recalls. "It just skids. I talked to Dmitri Nabokov about it, and he said that his father actually tried to perfect this shot for many years." Another devoted player-novelist is David Foster Wallace, whose **Infinite Jest** is set partly in a Massachusetts tennis academy.

Among tennis memoirs, Arthur Ashe's **Days of Grace** gets high marks from Marmion, while Amis plumps for Monica Seles's book, **Monica: My Journey from Fear to Victory**. As for books on technique, Amis singles out **Inner Tennis**, by W. Timothy Gallwey ("He wasn't a very good tennis player, but he was awfully good at concentrating"); Marmion thinks the best coaching books are those by Dennis Van Der Meer.

Sadly, it seems unlikely that coaching can proceed entirely on the page. The former champion Ivan Lendl told us that when he was growing up, there were no books around on tennis, and that he never read the books that came out during his career. Now that he's retired, though, he says he reads a great many books—on golf.

BENOÎT VAN INNIS

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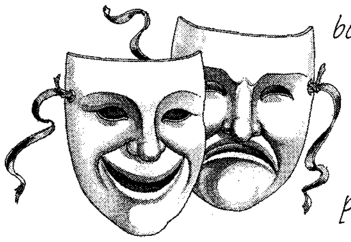

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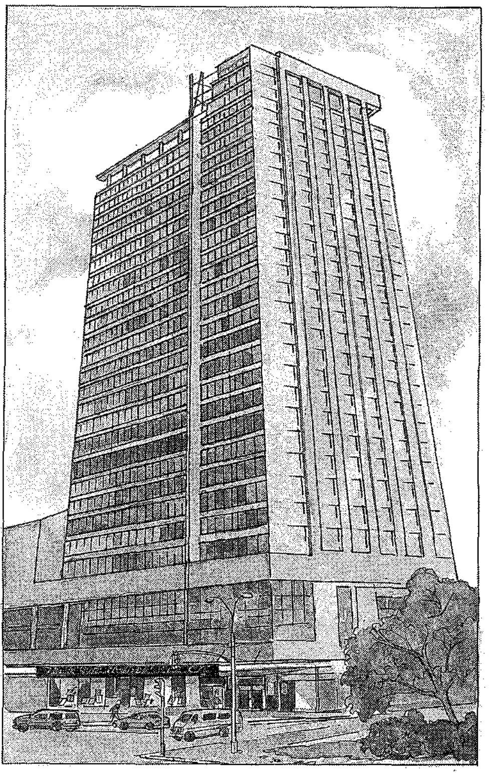

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THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Men in Black—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening July 2. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Out to Sea—A comedy by Martha Coolidge, about two dance hosts (Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau) on a cruise to the Caribbean. Opening July 2. (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea West, Cinema II, National Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and 34th St. East.)

Wild America—Scott Bairstow, Devon Sawa, and Jonathan Taylor Thomas play brothers who travel across the country in 1967 with a 16-mm. camera—characters based on the wildlife documentarians Marty, Mark (who is one of the producers), and Marshall Stouffer. William Dear directed. Opening July 2. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, and Village East Cinemas.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 20.)

Addicted to Love—A desperately misbegotten screwball comedy. Matthew Broderick plays a dreamy astronomer who comes to New York to win back his girlfriend (Kelly Preston), who's moved in with a Frenchman (Tcheky Karyo); Meg Ryan plays the Frenchman's jilted fiancée, a tough New Yorker. Robert Gordon's creepy, contrived screenplay has Broderick and Ryan teaming up to stalk their exes, then falling in love with each other, but together the two stars plumb new lows in sexual chemistry. Directed by Griffin Dunne.—S.K. (84th Street Sixplex and First & 62nd Cinemas.)

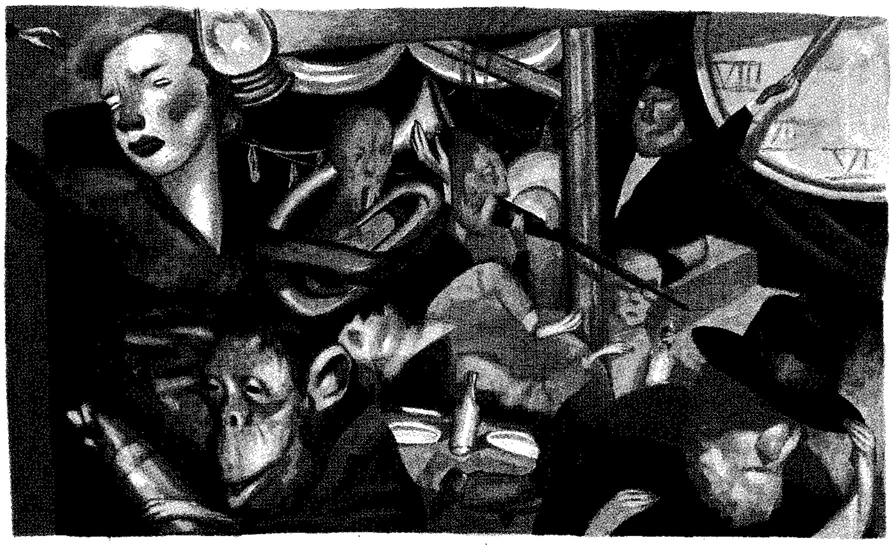
Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery—A parody of James Bond films and the swinging London of the sixties. The jokes are hit and miss, but Mike Myers, who plays dual roles (he's the super-sleuth photographer of the title, who's awakened from a cryogenic sleep he entered in 1967, and he's also Dr. Evil) and has upped the ante by writing his own script, delivers every line with a gentle, toothy, hilarious abandon. And Elizabeth Hurley, as the spy who helps Powers make the transition to the nineties, has a fine, dry way of setting up Myers's better jokes. The director is Jay Roach.—B.D. (East 85th Street, Manhattan Twin, National Twin, and Village Theatre VII.)

Batman & Robin—Mr. Freeze (Arnold Schwarzenegger) and Poison Ivy (Uma Thurman) battle Batman (George Clooney), Robin (Chris O'Donnell), and Batgirl (Alicia Silverstone) for control of Gotham City, in an adventure directed by Joel Schumacher. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Astor Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Brassed Off—Mark Herman's surprisingly enjoyable study of the effect of brass-band music on a depressed mining community in the North of England. Pete Postlethwaite stars as the bandleader, Danny. The miners' main reason to keep playing is the arrival of the bewitching Gloria (Tara Fitzgerald), who is actually working for the people who are planning to shut the pit down. The movie emerges, to Herman's great credit, not as stiff dialectic but as kindly, flexible farce. Also with Ewan McGregor.—A.L. (5/26/97) (Angelika Film Center, Beekman, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Breakdown—A well-made if not particularly original highway thriller, starring Kurt Russell as a man whose wife (Kathleen Quinlan) vanishes while they're vacationing in the Southwest. The director, Jonathan Mostow, milks a lot of anxiety out of dusty desert roads and creepy diners, building a fine suspense machine as Russell, in an impressive performance, tracks a menacing trucker (J. T. Walsh) who may be responsible for his wife's disappearance.—B.D. (84th Street Sixplex and Embassy 2.)

Chasing Amy—In Kevin Smith's low-budget comedy, a young comic-book artist (Ben Affleck) falls in love with a pretty, vivacious blonde (Joey Lauren Adams), who is, inconveniently, a lesbian. Smith doesn't have the skill to maintain a pleasurable sense of anticipation for an entire movie; this picture, his third, is as crummy-looking and as sluggishly paced as his début feature, the 1994 "Clerks."—T.R. (4/7/97) (62nd & Broadway, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)



At Anthology Film Archives, Emir Kusturica's "Underground."

TIM BOWER

Con Air—The premise is juicy enough: a bunch of America's most unreconstructed convicts, who are being flown to a new high-security jail, commandeer the plane and make a bid for freedom. The producer is Jerry Bruckheimer, whose previous offering was "The Rock." The cast includes John Cusack as the good guy, John Malkovich as the bad guy, Nicolas Cage as the bad guy turned good, and Steve Buscemi as the bad guy turned extremely strange. And yet the result never really takes off. The stunts are a gas and the explosions bang your eardrums, but the basic formula is now so exposed in its thinness and so blatant in its borrowings that the excitement soon grows horribly routine. The director, Simon West, is so fond of hitting highs that he forgets to add any lows. Cage almost rescues the movie; for all his muscle-flexing, he maintains the droopy, amused look of a man who's seen it all before. You know how he feels.—A.L. (6/9/97) (Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Daytrippers—A Long Island schoolteacher (Hope Davis) suspects her husband (Stanley Tucci) of infidelity, and confesses her fears to her parents (Anne Meara and Pat McNamara), her sister (Parker Posey), and her sister's boyfriend (Liev Schreiber). The whole group then piles into the car and heads for Manhattan, hoping to pick up the elusive husband's scent. This low-budget début feature by the writer and director Greg Mottola is no big deal, but it has a terrific ensemble, and Mottola's affection for the characters is obvious.—T.R. (3/24/97) (Angelika 57.)

Dream with the Fishes—A black comedy written and directed by Finn Taylor, about an encounter between a suicidal young man (David Arquette) and a dying one (Brad Hunt). With Cathy Moriarty. (Angelika Film Center.)

East Side Story—A documentary by Dana Ranga, on the history of movie musicals behind the Iron Curtain. In English, German, Russian, and Romanian. (Film Forum; through July 18.)

The English Patient—Written and directed by Anthony Minghella, from the novel by Michael Ondaatje, this long and searching movie tangles together a number of stories and characters: Almásy (Ralph Fiennes) and Katharine (Kristin Scott Thomas), who have an affair in North Africa before the Second World War; a French-Canadian nurse (Juliette Binoche) who cares for the badly burned Almásy after the war, and the Sikh soldier (Naveen Andrews) *she* has an affair with; and the mysterious Caravaggio (Willem Dafoe), a scavenging thief who appears to know the secrets of Almásy's past. The triumph of the film lies not just in the force and range of the performances but in Minghella's creation of an intimate epic: vast landscapes mingle with the minute details of desire, and the combination is transfixing.—A.L. (11/25/96) (59th Street East Cinema.)

Face/Off—An F.B.I. agent (John Travolta) and a terrorist (Nicolas Cage) exchange identities, in John Woo's action thriller. (Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Waverly.)

Fall—Eric Schaeffer's drama centers on a romance between a New York City cabdriver (Schaeffer) and a married model (Amanda de Cadenet). (Angelika Film Center.)

For Roseanne—A comedy detailing the lengths to which an Italian husband (Jean Reno) is willing to go to assure his dying wife (Mercedes Ruehl) the burial plot she wants. Directed by Paul Weiland. (Eastside Playhouse.)

Gabbeh—Director Mohsen Makhmalbaf's latest drama, inspired by the intricate carpets of Iranian nomads. In Farsi. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinemas.)

Head Above Water—Harvey Keitel, Cameron Diaz, Craig Sheffer, and Billy Zane star in a murder mystery directed by Jim Wilson. (68th St. Playhouse.)

HERCULES—The Disney Studios' thirty-fifth animated film, a musical comedy directed by John Musker and Ron Clements, with music and lyrics by Alan Menken and David Zippel, and the voices of Tate Donovan, Danny DeVito, and James Woods. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, and Village East Cinemas.)

INNOCENT SLEEP—A murder is made to look like a suicide in Scott Michell's conspiracy thriller. With Michael Gambon, Rupert Graves, Annabella Sciorra, Graham Crowden, John Hanna, and Franco Nero. (Quad Cinema.)

KOLYA—A likable enough Czech reworking of a tried-and-true formula: a sort of "Kramer vs. Kramer" set in Prague, in 1988-89, at the dawn of the Velvet Revolution. The screenwriter, Zdenek Sverak, also plays the central character, a bachelor cellist who suddenly finds himself responsible for an adorable Russian five-year-old. The cellist slowly grows out of his selfishness, and his love for this child who doesn't speak his language points to the new, boundaryless world that's about to open up. Directed by Jan Sverak. In Czech.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK—Steven Spielberg's sequel to his 1993 blockbuster is, at its best, unmistakably the product of a master craftsman, and this time around he has found a way to amuse himself even as he cranks out a kind of movie that he has obviously outgrown. The director plays on our eagerness to be frightened by his mechanical beasts, and manipulates us so effortlessly that we begin to laugh at how primitive our responses are. With Jeff Goldblum, Julianne Moore, and Pete Postlethwaite. Screenplay by David Koepp.—T.R. (6/2/97) (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION!—Equal-opportunity mawkishness. Joe Mantello's film version of the 1994 Terrence McNally play—he also directed it Off Broadway—hangs on to the Neil Simonesque structure of a group of gay men spending three summer weekends together at a country house. The group includes Stephen Spinella, John Benjamin Hickey, John Glover, Jason Alexander (as a stereotypical Broadway-loving queen), and Randy Becker (as a Latin hunk).—S.K. (Cinema 3rd Avenue and Gotham Cinema.)

MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING—In P. J. Hogan's romantic comedy, Julia Roberts gives a dazzling star performance, but the movie ultimately punishes her for the extraordinary force of her personality (and implicitly chastises the audience, too, for succumbing to it). Roberts's character learns that her former lover and current best friend (Dermot Mulroney) is engaged to be married; she suddenly realizes that she's in love with him and resolves to sabotage the nuptials by any means necessary. The screenplay, by Ronald Bass, sets up this classic screwball-comedy situation only to subvert it. For the first hour or so, Roberts's enthusiastic, sexy clowning energizes the picture, but then the filmmakers spoil our enjoyment of the heroine's deviousness: they allow dull good sense to triumph over their star's outsized appeal. What a letdown—you feel as if you'd been seduced and abandoned. Also with Cameron Diaz and Rupert Everett.—T.R. (6/16/97) (Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

NIGHT FALLS ON MANHATTAN—Yet another movie about New York City police corruption by Sidney Lumet. This one, starring Andy Garcia as a Manhattan D.A. prosecuting a drug king accused of shooting some cops, really belongs in a TV lineup. Lumet began his career, in the fifties, as a director of hard-hitting teleplays, and after years of Hollywood moviemaking he appears to have come full circle.—B.D. (84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 3, and Manhattan Twin.)

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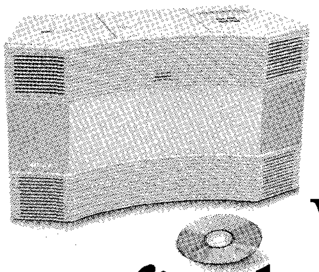

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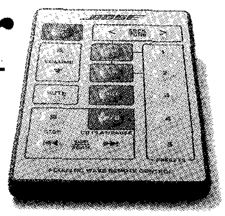

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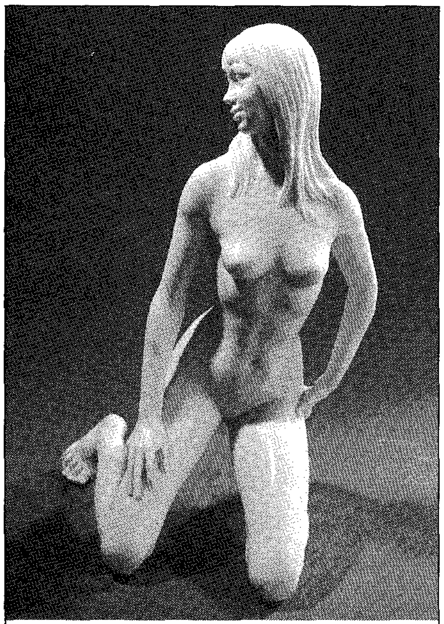

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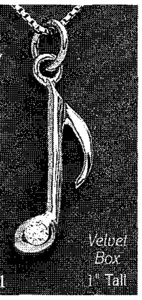

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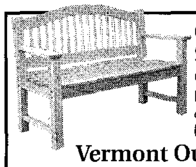

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The Pillow Book—A drama written and directed by Peter Greenaway, centering on a woman obsessed with having calligraphic messages inscribed on her body. With Vivian Wu, Yoshi Oida, and Ewan McGregor. In Japanese and English. (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 72nd Street East.)

Ponette—Writer-director Jacques Doillon's story of a four-year-old (Victoire Thivisol) who must come to terms with the sudden death of her mother. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

La Promesse—Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's powerful coming-of-age story stars Jérémie Rénier as Igor, a streetwise Belgian teenager who helps his scummy father (Olivier Gourmet) traffic in illegal immigrants. When Igor sees one of his father's hapless African victims fall off a ladder, he promises to protect the dying man's wife and child; his struggle to uphold his pledge turns into a morality tale permeated with a Dickensian indignation at evil. A risk-taking, original piece of work. In French.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Scream—An entertaining horror comedy in which the director Wes Craven and his scriptwriter, Kevin Williamson, take the clichés of fright films and reinvigorate them with a cheeky knowingness: the victims are horror-movie aficionados who in many instances make the same mistakes they've joked about seeing made on screen. With help from an unusually strong cast—Drew Barrymore, Neve Campbell, Courteney Cox, and David Arquette all do smashing work—Craven wrings some real thrills from the familiar perils of all those teen-age gorefests.—B.D. (Embassy 4 and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Speed 2: Cruise Control—Sandra Bullock, Jason Patric, and Willem Dafoe are the stars of Jan De Bont's new thriller, about a hijacked cruise ship. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

Temptress Moon—A gigolo (Leslie Cheung) is ordered by his gangster boss to seduce an heiress (Gong Li) in the house where he was once a servant. Directed by Chen Kaige. In Mandarin. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Tetsuo II: Body Hammer—Shinya Tsukamoto's futuristic thriller pits a street gang against an evil businessman. In Japanese. (Cinema Village.)

Ulee's Gold—In Ulee (short for Ulysses) Jackson, a widowed beekeeper living in the Florida panhandle, Peter Fonda has a role that perfectly suits his rocklike demeanor and makes virtues of his expressive limitations. The movie, written and directed by Victor Nunez, is designed to draw this lonely, quietly embittered man out of his emotional hibernation and get his blood running again. Nunez's direction makes this process seem even slower than it has to, but the film's sluggish rhythm doesn't hurt Fonda's performance; for once, his very deliberate style feels appropriate. He looks at home in this lush, sun-dazed world, and his characteristic stillness is surprisingly resonant: there's pain in it, and fear, and an awful kind of resignation. Also with Patricia Richardson.—T.R. (6/16/97) (Angelika Film Center and Regency.)

Underground—While there are many reasons to feel annoyed with Emir Kusturica's 1995 farce epic—its three-hour running time, its tuba-laden score, its frenetically overcrowded scenario of political allegories—this is still the richest, most delirious filmmaking in recent memory. The story covers fifty years of deception between two Yugoslav friends, Blacky and Marko, beginning in the Second World War, when Blacky and other anti-Nazi partisans bunker down in a secret underground cave manufacturing arms while Marko grows rich on the profits. After the war Marko keeps them in hiding by piping in recorded battle sounds and old news reports; he convinces them that the Nazis are still in power through Tito's regime and the subsequent nightmare of the civil war. The film is rude and disorganized, a black carnival of ghastly humor and brilliant imagery, the frame packed with an enormous amount of metaphorical information and Fellini-on-mescaline incongruities. As a visual fantasist, Kusturica rivals Terry Gilliam in sheer exuberance; he's a master of the go-for-broke shot. The picture takes time to get going, but when it does it's absolutely thrilling and unforgettable. In Serbo-Croatian.—B.D. (Anthology Film Archives.)

When the Cat's Away—An improvisational comedy, directed by Cédric Klapisch, about the search for a cat in Paris. In French. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

ALSO PLAYING

DONNIE BRASCO (reviewed in our issue of 3/17/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **DOUBLE TEAM:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FATHER'S DAY** (5/19/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **KAMA SUTRA:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE SAINT** (4/14/97): Worldwide Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.
Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy 1, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Manhattan Twin, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
68th St. Playhouse, Third Ave. at 68th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

City Lights (1931)—Charlie Chaplin befriends a tippling mogul (Harry Myers) who recognizes him only when he's drunk and a blind flower girl (Virginia Cherrill) who realizes he's a tramp only in the final scene. This saga of the little fellow in the big city is lilting slapstick poetry, an extended tragicomic riff on the theme of urban anonymity. As the tramp tries to save the girl from eviction and restore her sight, the movie rises above its pathos to become a celebration of living by your wits—something that Chaplin's exhilarating physicality allows the audience to experience under the skin. (The comic was never more hilarious than in the scene in which he enters a prize fight and uses the referee as a moving shield.) And even if you don't share James Agee's opinion, you can understand why he called the moment of truth between the cured flower girl and the tramp "the greatest piece of acting and the highest moment in movies." Chaplin directed, wrote, and scored this masterpiece of silent comedy.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; July 5.)

Enter the Dragon (1973)—Bruce Lee and John Saxon in a kung-fu movie that's a good-natured example of the pleasures of schlock art. There's so much going on that the whole history of movies seems to be recapitulated in scrambled form. It could be billed as the movie with a thousand climaxes. But it's not all schlock: the slender, swift Bruce Lee was the Fred Astaire of martial arts, and many of the fights that could be merely brutal come across as lightning-fast choreography. Directed by Robert Clouse.—P.K. (Brooklyn Museum of Art; July 5-6.)

Kiss Me Deadly (1955)—Robert Aldrich and his screenwriter, A. I. Bezzerides, take Mickey Spillane's 1952 private-eye novel and turn it into a swipe at consumer-era machismo. Mike Hammer (Ralph Meeker) picks up a desperate female hitchhiker (Cloris Leachman, in her first movie role); after some mysterious torturers murder her and nearly kill him, he decides to investigate the homicide himself—not because he got attached to the woman but because he figures that any case getting federal attention is bound to involve big money. As Hammer, Meeker is Brando stripped of poetry and sensitivity and glazed with playboy glamour: he's a clumsy, rabid spellbinder. So's the movie.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; July 4-6.)

My Darling Clementine (1946)—Among the greatest Westerns ever made. John Ford's version of the famous gunfight at the O.K. Corral is unhurried yet thrilling: it seems to be moving to the rhythm of Henry Fonda's tense, elegant stride. Fonda, wearing a little mustache, plays the fabled lawman Wyatt Earp, and it's a beautiful, delicately shaded performance. The movie is largely atmospheric and anecdotal—a patient buildup to the big shootout. And the action, when it comes, is swift, unfussy. This is a Westerner's Western—laconic and large-spirited. The rest of the cast isn't on Fonda's level, but Walter Brennan is terrifying as the patriarch of the murderous Clanton family, and Victor Mature coughs effectively as the bitter, self-destructive Doc Holliday.—T.R. (Bryant Park; July 7.)

La Nuit de Varennes (1981)—A creakingly cultured historical pageant set in the time of Louis XVI. For two and a half hours, the assorted historical and fictional personages look knowingly at each other and talk literately. As the decaying Casanova, Marcello Mastroianni has a couple of superb moments. Jean-Louis Barrault looks great as the scandalously popular, often pornographic writer Restif de la Bretonne, but the role has been written to make Restif a darling old reprobate, and Barrault just keeps smiling. Also with Hanna Schygulla as a royalist countess; Jean-Claude Brialy, who is almost a comic archetype as her devoted hairdresser; Harvey Keitel as Thomas Paine; and Daniel Gélin and Jean-Louis Trintignant. Directed by Ettore Scola. In French.—P.K. (Florence Gould Hall; July 8.)

Red-Headed Woman (1932)—Jean Harlow (with tinted hair) as a girl who exploits her charms and makes the climb from the wrong side of the tracks to a rich marriage and then up higher and higher. She's a smart cookie, and the picture is tough and funny. It caused a scandal in the movie industry, because she didn't suffer for her sins. Directed by Jack Conway.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; July 6.)

HIROSHI TANABE

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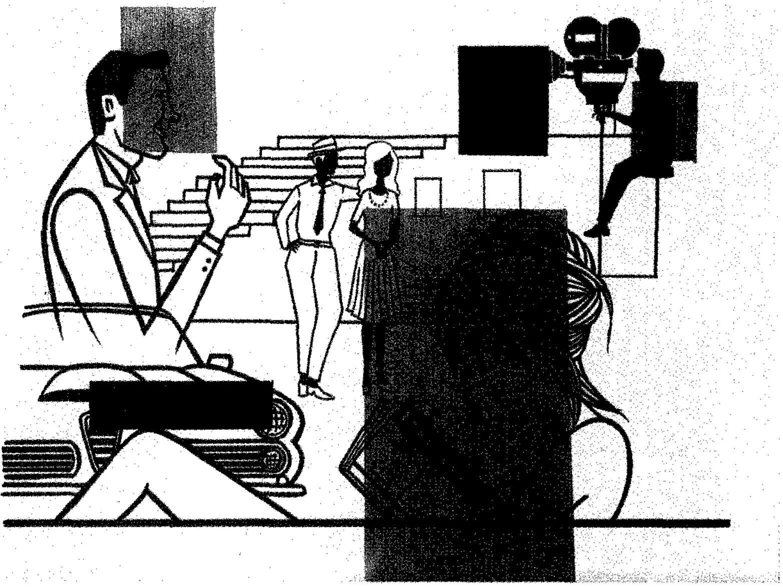
(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2 and 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**theatre 2:** July 2: "Murder Men" (1962, John Peyser) and "Tarzan's Peril" (1951, Byron Haskin)....July 3: "Carmen Jones" (1954, Otto Preminger)....July 4-6: "Gun Crazy" (1949, Joseph H. Lewis) and "Kiss Me Deadly" (†)....July 7: "My Best Girl" (1927, Sam Taylor; silent) and "Sparrows" (1926, William Beaudine; silent), both with Mary Pickford.... From July 8: "Johnny Guitar" (1954, Nicholas Ray) and "Rancho Notorious" (1952, Fritz Lang).... **theatre 3:** "Contempt." (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.)



Jack Palance and Brigitte Bardot in "Contempt."

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films written by Frances Marion. July 3 at 2:30: "Blondie of the Follies" (1932, Edmund Goulding)....July 3 at 6: "Love" (1927, Goulding; silent)....July 3 at 8: "The Wind" (1928, Victor Seastrom; silent)....July 4 at 2:30: "Good News" (1930, Nick Grinde and Edward J. MacGregor)....July 4 at 6: "Let Us Be Gay" (1930, Robert Z. Leonard)....July 4 at 8: "Riffraff" (1935, J. Walter Ruben)....July 5 at 2: "The Champ" (1931, King Vidor)....July 5 at 5: "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor)....July 6 at 2: "Camille" (1937, Cukor)....July 6 at 5: "Red-Headed Woman" (†)....July 7 at 2:30: "Hold Your Man" (1933, Sam Wood)....July 7 at 6: "Zander the Great" (1925, George W. Hill; silent)....July 8 at 2:30: "The Girl from Missouri" (1934, Jack Conway)....July 8 at 6: "Emma" (1932, Clarence Brown).... ¶ A series of films made between 1918 and 1949 with all African-American casts. July 3 at 3 and July 8 at 6: "The Birth of a Race" (1918, John W. Noble; silent) and "Body and Soul" (1925, Oscar Micheaux; silent)....July 3 at 6: "Boy! What a Girl!" (1945, Arthur Leonard)....July 4 at 3: "Blood of Jesus" (1941, Spencer Williams) and "Dirty Gertie from Harlem" (1946, Williams)....July 4 at 7:30: "Double Deal" (1939, Arthur Dreifuss) and "Souls of Sin" (1949, Powell Lindsay)....July 5 at 2: "Two Gun Man from Harlem" (1938, Richard C. Kahn) and "Beware" (1946, Bud Pollard)....July 5 at 5: "Underworld" (1937, Micheaux)....July 6 at 2: "Broken Strings" (1940, Bernard B. Ray)....July 6 at 5: "The Scar of Shame" (1926, Frank Peregini; silent) and "Eleven P.M." (1928, Richard D. Maurice; silent)....July 7 at 3: "Miracle in Harlem" (1948, Jack Kemp)....July 7 at 6: "Dark Manhattan" (1937, Harry Fraser)....July 8 at 3: "Within Our Gates" (1920, Micheaux; silent).... ¶ July 8 at 1: "The Man with the Movie Camera" (1929, Dziga Vertov; silent).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—July 2-3 at 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10: "Contempt." (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.)...July 4 at 2, 4, 6, 7:45, and 9:30; July 5-6 at 4:15, 6, 7:45, and 9:30; and July 7-8 at 2, 4, 6, 7:45, and 9:30: "For Ever Mozart" (1996, Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

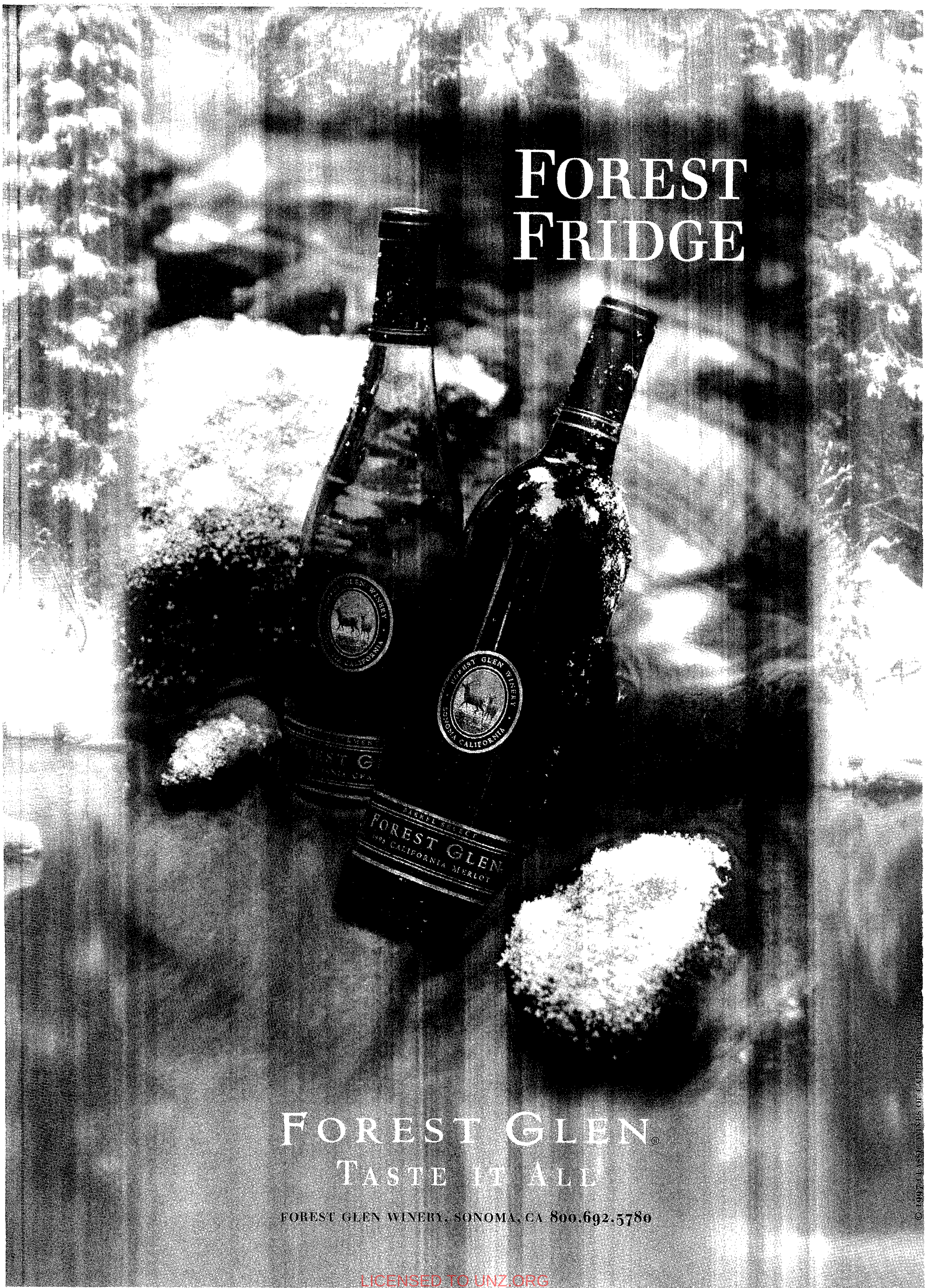
Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 8 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9:30: "La Nuit de Varennes" (†).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of silent films with their original recorded orchestral scores. July 5 at 2: "Spite Marriage" (1929, Eddie Sedgewick)....July 5 at 4: "City Lights" (†)....July 6 at 2: "Moulin Rouge" (1928, E. A. Dupont)....July 6 at 4: "The Blue Light" (1933, Leni Riefenstahl).

Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with Looney Tunes and coming attractions. The feature on July 7 will be "My Darling Clementine" (†). (Rain date is the following night.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. (718-638-5000, ext. 230)—July 5 at 3 and 7 and July 6 at 3: "Enter the Dragon" (†).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—A program of films by Robert Bresson; in French, with no English subtities. July 2 at 8: "Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne" (1944)....July 5 at 6 and 8: "Un Condamné à Mort S'est Échappé" (1956)....July 6 at 6 and 8: "Pickpocket" (1959)....July 8 at 8: "Au Hazard, Balthazar" (1966).... ¶ July 4-8 at 5:30: "Arizona Dream" (1993, Emir Kusturica).... ¶ July 5 at 10 and July 6 at 4: "Corridor" (1994, Sarunas Bartas).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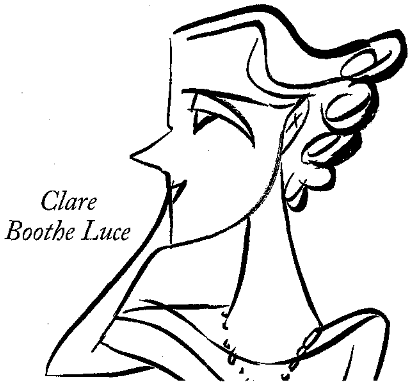
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

INK

Etiquette experts vs. writer in a catfight worthy of Clare Boothe Luce.

In the opening scene of “The Women,” Clare Boothe Luce’s 1936 jeremiad against (or was it actually a paean to?) her sex, a character named Sylvia Fowler shows off her new manicure, in a shade called Jungle Red, to the members of her Park Avenue bridge circle. “Too, too—*too!*” one lady says of the color, before pronouncing it “just the thing for tearing your friends apart.” The line could be interpreted as a sort of warning shot for another Sylvia who would enter Luce’s orbit some fifty years later, Sylvia Jukes Morris. Morris spent fifteen years researching the first volume of her two-part biography of Clare Boothe Luce, “Rage for Fame,” only to see the book dismissed by Judith Martin in the *Times Book Review* a few weeks ago as “censorious,” a petty, jealous work whose “relentless hammering perversely tempts you to secretly switch your sympathies to the beleaguered villain.”



Clare Boothe Luce

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

Most reviews of Morris’s book have been more positive, and the *Times* review has people talking, particularly in Washington, D.C., where both Morris and Martin live. What’s being whispered is that Martin, who writes the “Miss Manners” syndicated newspaper column, has been joined in her gleeful book-bashing by Letitia Baldrige, Martin’s fellow etiquette authority and Clare Boothe Luce’s social secretary during her years as United States Ambassador to Italy in the Eisenhower Administration. (Baldrige declined to attend several book parties for “Rage for Fame,” including one at the Maryland home of William and Buffy Cafritz and one at Selwa Roosevelt’s in Georgetown; Morris said she had put Baldrige on the guest lists.)

Baldrige, reached by telephone at home, where she was preparing dinner the other night, said, “The *Times* review was a fantastic and wonderful surprise. Mrs. Luce was my idol. How dare Sylvia Morris talk about her being self-satisfied at the age of nine?” So Baldrige didn’t like the book? “I haven’t actually read it,” she said. “She never bothered to call me to talk about Mrs. Luce.”

“Of course I called Tish Baldrige,” Morris said when asked about the brouhaha. “She was one of the first people I interviewed for the book. I remember having tea with her at the old Mayfair Hotel on the East Side, and she’s mentioned in my acknowledgments. Of course, she didn’t know Clare Luce until she was in her fifties, so most of what she told me won’t be useful until I write the next volume.” (When asked about the tea, Baldrige said she had forgotten it.)

As for Baldrige’s role in disparaging her book, Morris sighed. “I know it to be the case that Tish Baldrige has it in for my book,” she said. “There’s an article in *Town & Country* in which she refers to it as ‘ambitious,’ which I read as *overreaching*. What I find strange is people giving opinions about books they haven’t read. I can take my knocks. But I felt there was something else going on here. I just don’t know what Martin’s motives were. She and Baldrige are in the same business. And perhaps that is as far as I should go here.”

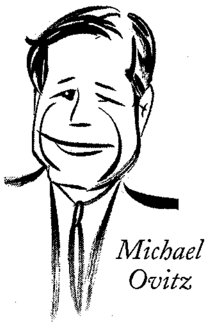
When the biographer’s husband, Edmund Morris, sent an angry four-page letter to Martin, she forwarded it to her editor at the *Times*, along with two photocopied entries from her “Miss Manners” manuals. One was on the subject of the letter to a book-review editor from “the stung author” (“Miss Manners is sorry to have to point out that it merely serves … to alert everyone that the criticism made its mark”); the other was headed “Letters That Should Not Be Written” (“There are some letters that ought never to be written. Most of them happen to be four pages long”).

When pressed, Baldrige admitted that she is friendly with Martin. “I didn’t discuss this review with her until after it was in print,” she said. “You know what it was? I’m convinced that Mrs. Luce was so enraged up in Heaven that she got Miss Manners’s mind together with mine. It was a marvellous consolidating of wits.” Baldrige said she called Martin to congratulate her on a job well done. “We giggled and had a great conversation—a female conversation,” she said. “Look, there’s Judith Martin, my *big rival*. And we are absolutely brought together in our dislike of this book. For that moment, we embodied ‘The Women.’ ” After a brief pause, she added, “The good side of ‘The Women,’ I mean.” —Eric Konigsberg

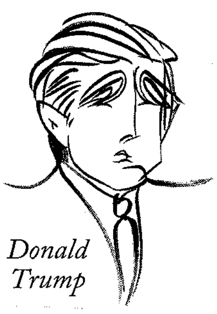
THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

Sure the millennium is near, but with Keith Haring back at the Whitney it feels like the eighties again.

My friend who runs a several-hundred-million-dollar hedge fund is obsessed with calling each market bottom, divining that precise moment when share values have fallen as far as they’re going to fall and can therefore only go up. When I began hearing that Hamptons homeowners were summering elsewhere at an unprecedented rate this year, I thought I sensed a market bottom—not in South Fork real-estate prices, about which I have no idea, but in the nineteen-eighties as Zeitgeist artifact and life-style concept. If the Hamptons were all about the eighties, and vice versa, and if the Hamptons are now over ("over" in the sense of a brilliant supernova that collapses into a black hole—still supermassive and inescapable, but just not very . . . bright), then the eighties, I figure, must be about to rebound like crazy.


Michael Ovitz

Keith Haring


Donald Trump

Of course, there have been some leading indicators of an incipient eighties revival: "Rent"; the permanently rising stock market; Julian Schnabel's Basquiat movie; the solvency of Donald Trump; the comeback of Aerosmith; the appearance on fashion-show runways of stiletto heels and micro-miniskirts; a renewed cachet attaching to caviar and fur and cigars and narcotics. But until the Whitney Museum, an ur-eighties cultural institution, got into the act, one couldn't be absolutely sure. Last week, a major retrospective devoted to the work of the graffiti artist Keith Haring opened at the Whitney, and now it's indisputable: the eighties are back.

KEITH HARING was like the Hamptons: manic, moneyed, fun, party-driven, celebrity-obsessed, shameless—that is, like the eighties. The decade didn't really start until the end of 1982, when the great modern bull market began. That's also when Haring's career took off, thanks to his inclusion in that season's Whitney Biennial. And befitting such a self-conscious era, there were no loose ends when the decade concluded: practically the instant 1989 turned to 1990, the Berlin Wall came down, a recession began, Trump went bust, and, on February 16th, Keith Haring died of AIDS.

"There was *such* a sense that he was delighted to be alive in that decade," Elisabeth Sussman, curator of the Whitney show, said when I asked about Haring. "It's so quintessentially eighties to go from the street to the disco to the gallery." In art, salient features of the eighties were a return to figurative style, the disappearance of distinctions between high and low, and the rise of full-bore marketing and of the overpriced overnight sensation. Haring, of course, embodied all of these, but, unlike many of the decade's "serious" young artists, he did not insist on appearing anguished as well as rich. He wasn't a dark, handsome, unsmiling asshole. His barking dogs, glowing babies, and jaunty everypeople are not much more than pleasant downtown wallpaper, evanescent Bobby McFerrinism—don't worry, sell doodles!—but at least their unpretentiousness and unimportance are in proper synch.

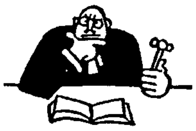
Keith Haring now seems more like a character in "Rent" than an actual person. The Whitney exhibit even has its own soundtrack CD, produced by the Haring-era d.j. Junior Vasquez. The artist's natural sweetness has been distilled, inevitably, into a slightly cloying version of itself—Haring as boho Barney. Children will be admitted free to the museum (where they will doubtless enjoy the lesser-known Haring images of cheery erect penises and fellatio). The evocations of Haring's inner-child joie de vivre and the fact of his death at age thirty-one bathe him in a heroic glow. At the Whitney, one can begin to imagine a time, not so far off, when one aspect of our common eighties memory archives will be a bittersweet survivors' recollection of the plague era, like grandparents' accounts of the 1918 influenza epidemic—that is, H.I.V. nostalgia.

Here's how modern retro works: each completed decade needs to lie fallow for seven or eight years before nostalgia can sprout, bloom like crazy for another seven or eight years, and then disappear. Remember-the-seventies delirium broke out among the fashion forward in 1988; by 1995, the "Brady Bunch" movie was a hit and seventies clothing modes (bell-bottoms, tight synthetics, ruffled satiny shirts) were moving fast from cutting-edge designer collections to the Gap.

Which means the seventies revival will be thoroughly tapped out just as the eighties revival kicks in. Any day now *Vogue* will be declaring, "The power suit is back!" A Michael Ovitz figure will arise, possibly Michael Ovitz himself. Wall Street will crash, but we won't panic. And let's see, there will be an interminable Presidential scandal like Iran-Contra that nobody besides the President's political enemies and the special prosecutor really cares about. David Letterman will be the coolest thing on late night, a McNally brother will open another ultra-fabulous downtown restaurant, and the Whitney Museum will hang paintings by Keith Haring and make Hilton Kramer apoplectic. So maybe this isn't an eighties "revival." Maybe the early nineties were just a hiatus. Maybe the eighties never ended. —KURT ANDERSEN

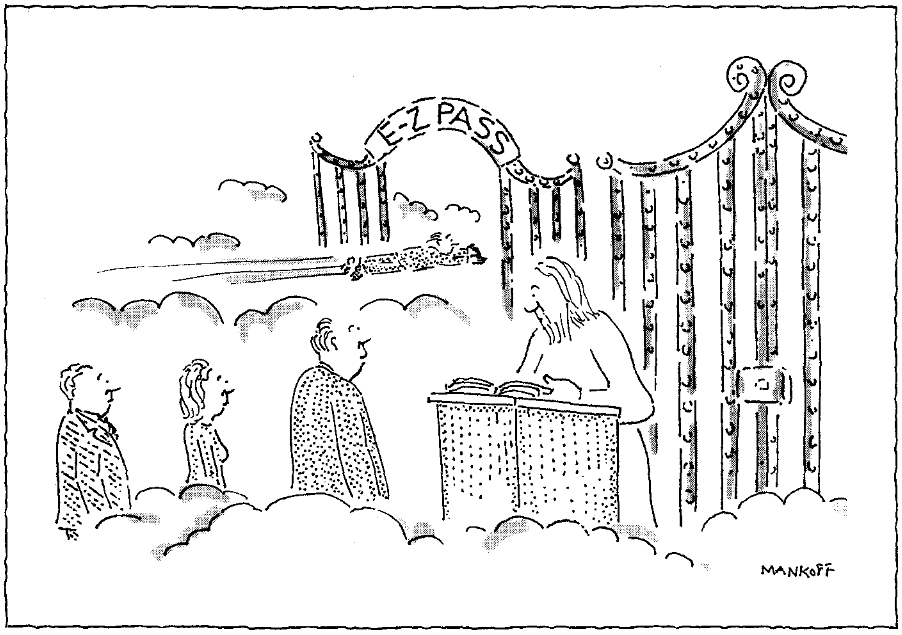
THE BENCH

What do John Hinckley and just about everyone else in D.C. have in common?



SIGMUND FREUD didn't know the half of it when he wrote, "The psychic development of the individual is a short repetition of the course of development of the race." Consider the scene that took place one day last month before United States District Court Judge June L. Green, in Washington, D.C. Under her increasingly skeptical glare, the attorney Barry William Levine attempted to convince the court that the psychosis of his famous client, John W. Hinckley, Jr., had all but vanished, and that he deserved some "very modest" relief: monthly twelve-hour furloughs from St. Elizabeth's—the mental hospital that has been Hinckley's home since 1982, when he was found not guilty by reason of insanity for attempting to assassinate President Reagan in order to impress the actress Jodie Foster.

To make his case, Levine had done what good lawyers always do: he marshalled a cadre of psychiatric experts who swore that Hinckley was as sane as the next guy. Levine's biggest gun was Kirk Heilbrun, co-director of the law and psychology program at Allegheny University of the Health Sciences. Heilbrun testified that Hinckley had experienced a full re-



mission of his clinical symptoms; the only remaining problem was a little thing called "narcissistic personality disorder."

Paraphrasing from the "D.S.M.-IV," a.k.a. the shrink's handbook, Heilbrun elaborated: "To be diagnosed with a narcissistic personality disorder, an individual must have at least five of the following symptoms. One is a grandiose sense of self-importance. Second, a preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance. Third is believing oneself to be special or understood only by other special or high-status people. The fourth is requiring a lot of admiration—excessive admiration, really. The fifth is a sense of entitlement, where one assumes that one's requests should automatically be met, or one should get special privileges or things like that. A sixth is the tendency to be exploitative personally, to use other people to achieve your own ends. A seventh is [to be] lacking in empathy, not really being able to feel the way other people feel, or at least understand what their emotional reaction might involve. An eighth is envy, often feeling envious of others. And, finally, being perceived by others as arrogant or haughty."

The gallery stirred slightly when he finished. "Sounds like everyone in Washington," someone whispered, and judging from the fidgety half smiles on the lips of those nearby, many others agreed.

Judge Green, however, wasn't cynical enough to get the joke. It took her just a few days to decide that Hinckley should stay locked up. —Mimi Swartz

THE SPORTING SCENE

Girls may be more mature, but they still throw flying elbows like the big boys.

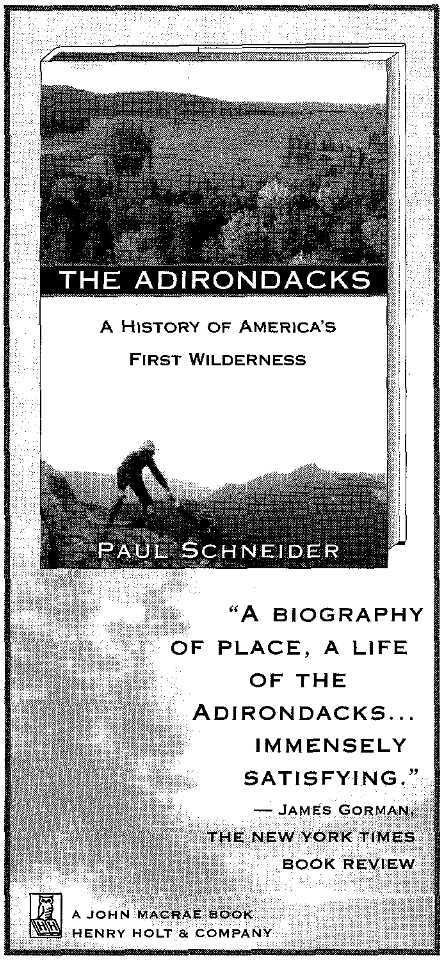
MAYBE someday soon you'll be wearing Air Lobo sneakers and a Teresa Weatherspoon jersey. Maybe someday soon Madison Square Garden will be rumbling with yells of "*De*-fense, girlfriend!" and "Mommy! Watch out for that moving screen!" That's because last month the Women's National Basketball Association began its inaugural season and New York's team, the Liberty, played its first minutes ever as a professional basketball team, a pre-season matchup with the Cleveland Rockers.

There were lots of firsts at the game: the first singing of the national anthem at a Liberty game (performed by six-foot-two-inch, two-hundred-and-ten-pound forward Kym Hampton, who plans to record her first CD in her spare time); the first foul (called on the star center/forward Rebecca Lobo, a minute and nine seconds into the first half); and the first mini-brawl (Liberty guard Teresa Weatherspoon vs. Cleveland Rockers guard Tina Nicholson, flying elbows). The first discussion of body art took place in the Liberty locker room after the game, when Teresa Weatherspoon corrected our observation that she had a flower tattoo on her stomach. "Flowers? Are you kidding?" Weatherspoon growled. "Hey, baby, it's a *tiger*, not flowers. I ain't that sweet." In the finest professional-sports tradition, there was also the first spouting forth of clichés by the coach at the post-game press conference: "We're making adjustments mentally . . . took the challenge. . . . Our post players got some layups . . . executed better. . . . We're doubling down on the post . . . set some screens . . . played from the heart . . . coming together as a team." Hey, you *go,* girl.

N.B.A., W.N.B.A.: Compare and contrast. O.K., men dunk, women hit layups. Men wear baggy shorts, women wear even baggier shorts. Audiences at men's games are viciously partisan, audiences at women's games are nice and applaud anything good that happens, regardless of team. N.B.A. teams employ meagrely clad female aerobics instructors to roll around on the floor during time-outs; the formation of the W.N.B.A. Boy Toy Dancers has yet to be announced. Women play close to the floor and crash and bang around a lot; N.B.A. games are more like sprinting contests between guys on stilts wearing jet packs. Now that men are going pro before they've graduated from college, before they've ever had an ordinary job, before they've maybe even ever had their own *apartments*, the N.B.A. is starting to look like a gathering of male super-babies who are taller than tall, richer than rich, and less and less like average humans. Women professional basketball players seem pretty normal. Until this year, women didn't have a well-financed American league to join, so once they graduated from college they either played overseas or stayed here and grew up and had actual lives. Liberty guard Rhonda Blades is a nurse practitioner. Cleveland Rockers forward Lynette Woodard is a registered stockbroker. Liberty forward Trena Trice played professionally in Spain, France, Brazil, and Italy, and raised a daughter. "My daughter's four years old, and she's so excited to see her mommy play in Madison Square Garden," Trice said after the game. "But what she's really excited about is seeing Rebecca Lobo play." Kym Hampton happened to be sitting nearby, waiting to take a shower. "Your baby's into Rebecca?" she asked Trice.

"She sure is," Trice said. "Rebecca—that's her girl."

Oh, another first: the New York Liberty won the game, their first ever, beating the Rockers 87–69. —Susan Orlean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LETTER FROM LONDON

THE CULTURE OF BLAIRISM

Britain's new governing mood isn't just a matter of the New Labour Government.

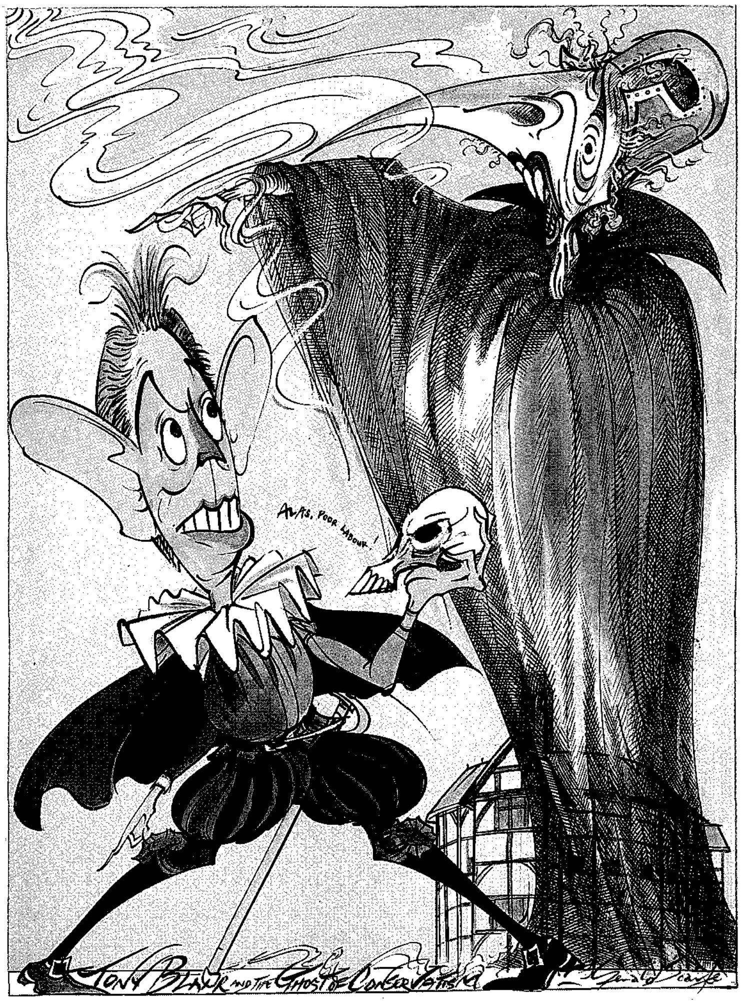
BY ADAM GOPNIK

THE opening of the new Globe, a full-scale replica of Shakespeare's theatre, on the South Bank this month was accompanied by a steady flow of information about what the original theatre was like, why it looked the way it did, and what went on inside it. Somehow, though, the most instructive story about the old Globe got left out. The Globe, it seems, was originally over in Shoreditch, on the north bank of the Thames, and Shakespeare's company was involved in an unhappy negotiation to renew the lease. On December 28, 1598, while London slept under a blanket of snow, some of the company, anticipating a page from the Rupert Murdoch playbook, simply took the theatre apart, timber by timber, picked up the pieces, walked across the bridge, and reassembled it on cheaper land, on the South Bank, leaving a furious landlord with a prime piece of property and no money-making theatre on it. The moral of the story—one moral, anyway—is that a cultural flowering can be built on a foundation of sharp dealing, the runaway shop, lease-breaking, and all the other unacceptable faces of capitalism; at the base of one of the greatest English renaissances lay a piece of extremely sharp business dealing. Before the play starts, somebody has to pick up the playhouse and put it in a profitable place.

The Globe reopening was one of half a dozen happy omens and serendipitous symbols gracing the first weeks of the New Labour Government in Britain—and one of many that, on examination, had a shadowy or ambiguous aspect, suggesting curious forms of amnesia about the circumstances that had produced the bright new moment. Although everyone talks about Tony Blair's acceptance of Thatcherism as an economic foundation, the role of Thatcherism in producing the London cultural renaissance, which New Labour has now taken possession of, is more easily overlooked. The revolution, it is said, always eats its children. This may be the first case where the children have eaten the revolution, drizzled with virgin olive oil, and now seem to have a hard time remembering who cooked the meal.

Even the most skeptical visitor can't help being impressed by the mood in London since the election of Blair's government, in May. "There has been nothing like it since Kennedy's first year," Roy Jenkins, the grand old man of British moderation, says, with the authority of someone who has been around long enough to say things like that. "This sense of a whole new generation coming to power, breaking through the Old Guard, and establishing not merely a policy but a *style* entirely its own." Jenkins says this with admiration. He regards himself, with reason, as the spiritual godfather of New Labour, since it was his departure from the Labour Party, in the early eighties, to found the Social Democrats that heralded what would become the socialist heresy—Blairism. (He is also one of the few veterans whom Blair consults regularly.) But he says this with detachment, too: he is of the Old Guard, and the New Labour style is not his. "It is important in life to have an uppercase ambition and a lowercase ambition," he goes on. "It doubles the chances for happiness. My uppercase ambition was to break the hold of the two-party system and establish the Liberal Democrats as the party of power. In this I failed. My lowercase ambition was to pull the Labour Party back from the wilder shores of lunacy, and in this we were more successful than anyone could have imagined."

Because the policy differences between New Labour and the old Tories are so small, the sense of change registers most clearly in the symbols of governing. The symbolism can be as simple as Blair's decision to ask his colleagues to call him Tony. But the symbolic reordering goes deeper, too, into potent areas of national memory. Such symbols include Blair's decision to apologize for the English role in the Irish potato famine of the last century, and his decision to consider pardoning the hundreds of soldiers who were shot for things like desertion or cowardice in the First World War, an acknowledgment that, in effect, might make that war in the nation's official symbolism what it has long been in its artistic and cultural symbolism—not the Great War but the Wrong War. (Someone said that if Margaret Thatcher ever came back to power she would have the deserters dug up and shot all over again.)


Alas, poor Labour!
Tony Blair and the Ghost of Conservatism
Gerald Scarfe

The lesson of the new Globe may be to remind us that English culture at its most English was also at its most Continental.

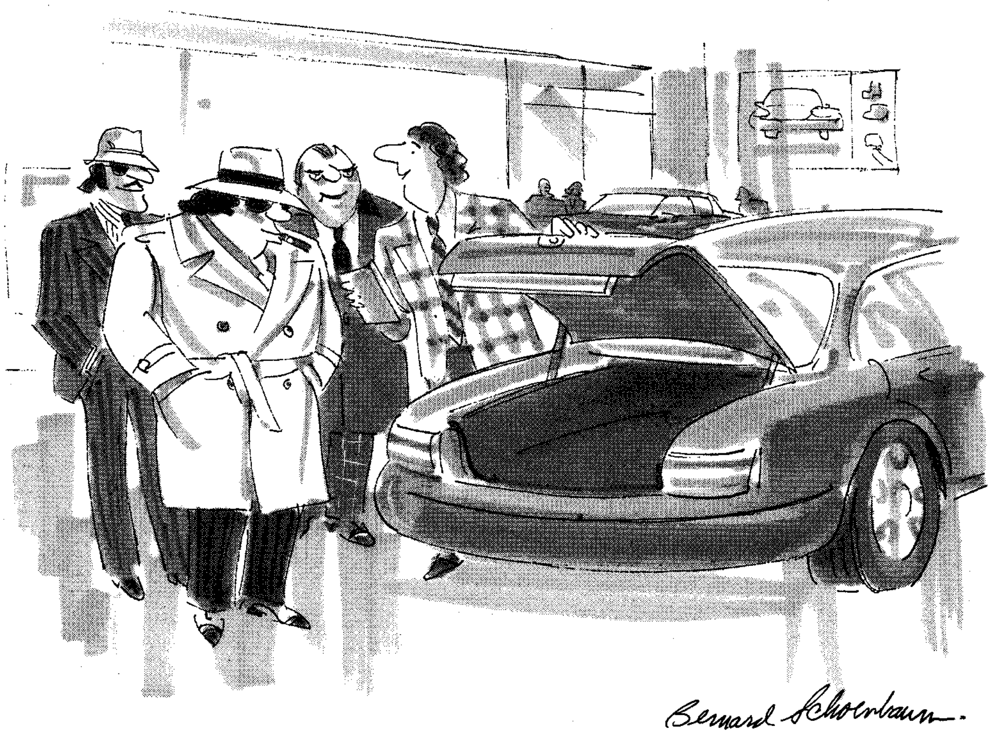
GERALD SCARFE

Blair is lucky in his timing. The London climate has changed. For reasons that may be sinister, having to do with global warming, or may be benign and merely cyclical, the past few summers in the British Isles have been among the warmest and sunniest of the century, and this summer could be warmer and sunnier still. Britain seems on its way to having a nearly Mediterranean climate. (Perhaps the Mediterranean is exchanging climates with England, and the Spanish will soon be sitting in drafty pubs in thick jumpers drinking warm beer and dreaming of package holidays in Brighton.) The warm weather, coupled with the new government, has produced not just general good feeling but positive euphoria. A disconcerting kind of ecstatic fizziness seems to have bubbled up in the damp British soul. Even the right-wing press, if not actually singing the words, has been humming along with the harmony. The *Daily Telegraph* ran a feature announcing that Mrs. Blair is the most chic British "first lady" in years (a small kerfuffle ensued about whether or not Cherie Blair can be called a first lady, Britain presumably having one already), while *The Economist* announced its admiration for the "focus and energy" of the new team, and *The Spectator* published an article, by the right-wing business tycoon Lord Hanson, saying, in effect, so far so good. Peter Stothard, the editor of the London *Times*, says, in his windowless Wapping office, "I think that even Conservatives find this moment liberating—liberating to rethink conservatism, liberating to see so much energy in government." (The *Times* endorsed no party in the election, urging a general anti-Europe vote.) The feel-good factor has even spread to the grumpy genius of Celtic soul, Van Morrison, who a few weeks ago took part in an outdoor concert in London at which he actually showed up on time, *and* smiled, *and* sang a couple of his old standards ("Domino" and "Jackie Wilson Said").

Blair, of course, does not take credit for all this, but he gets it anyway. It's not hard to be more popular than Jesus right now in England—a recent study indicated that by 2002 the country will have more practicing Muslims than Anglicans—but Blair may be more popular than the Beatles. (The Beatles made more money than any other British group last year.) The latest polls show his popularity rating at eighty-two per cent, easily the highest that has been registered since polling on these questions began.

Blair himself is nearly beside the point. Who he is and what he is really like are, in a way, unknowable. ("He's normal," one intimate says. "He has a normal wife. He laughs at normal jokes, normally." Well, that's settled.) But those who lay claim to Blair—to Blairism—seem to have a distinct and identifiable style. What's remarkable is the emergence not of the New Labour Government but of New Labour manners. Many Americans in London point out that, whatever the resemblances between Clinton's and Blair's electoral styles, the most striking difference is Blair's success as an usher of generational advance. "Clinton arrived in Washington with a clique but without a cohort," an American diplomat says, a little sadly. "Blair has both."

Though the strength of the London renaissance lies in the City and its financial services, the emotional focus lies in the media—in "software" and "information" and all the other late-twentieth-century euphemisms for show business. New Labour people talking about the London renaissance are much more likely to talk about John Galliano and Britpop than about the computerization of finance. The City—indeed, all of familiar Central London—is where the other side lives. This is literally true. A day among the New Labourites takes you from the River Cafe, down by the docks, which is a kind of New Labour canteen, out to Islington, where Blair lived until his victory, and where the Blairites reign, and



"And notice, gentlemen, this year's model has twenty per cent more trunk space."

over to Camden Town, where Blair's adviser Philip Gould lives, and you never run once through the center of London except for Westminster itself. The Central London borough of Kensington and Chelsea remains the last Tory redoubt. The reprobate Tory Alan Clark was parachuted into the constituency at the last moment, and won easily. Clark's published diaries contain the most beautiful line in modern British political thought. "I only can properly enjoy carol services," he reflects, "if I am having an illicit affair with someone in the congregation."

In one way, New Labour manners are a subset of the manners that were first characterized, on the East Coast, as "yuppie." The yuppie style was, basically, that of the first group of Americans who had an upper-class belief in their entitlement to pleasure but did not own real estate. In England, more complicatedly, the manners are those of the first group of people who have a sense of absolute entitlement to pleasure but do not own real estate *in the country*. New Labour, though it includes many intellectuals, is not an intellectual movement. Its primary transformation involves an unembarrassed attitude toward pleasure. Terence Conran's vast Bluebird complex, on the King's Road—a kind of mega-Balducci's combining a restaurant, a food hall, a café, a club, and an outdoor market—is to New Labour what the Crystal Palace was to High Victorianism. It may be difficult to imagine a New Labourite asphyxiating himself while dressed in women's stockings, as one Tory M.P. did in the last government, but it is not hard to imagine someone going to debtors' prison after running up a bill in focaccia.

The New Labour fanaticism about food goes hand in hand with a fanaticism about children. New Labour manners, like comparable manners in America, are almost punitively obsessive about child-rearing. Cooking and child-rearing have become the substitute religion of upper-middle-class people of the late twentieth century. (The one love in Bill Clinton's life whose depth and sincerity no one doubts is his love for Chelsea Clinton.) Every group has a code and a set of secret passwords. The entrée to any member of the Blair team is talk about child-rearing. This is not to suggest that the apparat of the previous government were unloving toward their children; rather, this kind of obsessive caring is a style that they would have found embarrassing. (This is still true of the left in France. A French minister who was asked about his children by a reporter would be offended, but he would be perfectly affable if he was asked, in discreet code, about the health of his mistress.)

Overheard at Brooks's, the club in St. James's, among old Tories and Labourites: a stiff-upper-lip protest about a favorite son's not getting into Oxford, which quickly vanishes in general embarrassment. Among New Labourites, on the other hand, you can talk instantly about how many changes of underwear you should pack for a three-year-old going to nursery school for the first time. A conversation with Mark Fisher, the genial new arts minister, winds effortlessly from the question of how to employ the lottery windfall so that it will broaden the base for provincial theatre to the modalities of keeping a two-year-old away from junk TV.

Fisher is open-faced, open-hearted, and—even by American, gee-whiz standards—almost touchingly enthusiastic as he talks about, say, the possibility of really *designing*, rather than just throwing up, the next generation of government buildings. He has redecorated his office with art from what seems to be a government Depot of Bad Painting, but at least it is sixties painting, called back to the walls from the last time Labour was in power. The old-style Pop- and Op-art optimism overflows the frames and seems to flood the office. Even the bright-red ministerial boxes that fill the desk look as shiny and virginal as Christmas presents.

The innocent air, though it may be calculated, is not without content, and even cold purpose. Many New Labourites believe that the worst of the old system they have inherited lingers in the British obsession with placement—the fear of being in the wrong place, or taken for the wrong type—that, filtering down from the aristocratic manner, remained even after the aristocrats lost the power to impose it. (The French aristocratic manner involves an unembarrassed sense of pleasure; the British involves an unembarrassed sense of place.) Even more than simple snobbery, what limited Britain was a self-consciousness that involves a fear of doing things that are too keen, too clever, or too trendy. It's not a boorish emotion, for it comes from a hypersensitivity about social minutiae which still makes an American feel coarse—the whole self-conscious side of English civilization that James loved. But that self-consciousness is a crippling emotion, too, keeping many intelligent and gifted Englishmen under a kind of permanent emotional house arrest. (You see this in the reactions to the new Globe: many Shakespeare-loving Londoners felt humiliated by the idea of a rebuilding, with its savor of ye-olde pleasures. It was just so naff. It took an American, the character actor Sam Wanamaker, to lead the movement to rebuild the Globe, and American money financed much of the rebuilding.)

If there is a salutary moral core at the heart of New Labour, apart from the carnival of new manners, it lies in a desire to end the deference culture, with its paralyzing compulsion to find a place where you will be so well armored by some mixture of irony and tradition that you will be impregnable to other people's sneers. Here the Kennedy comparison runs off the tracks, for if the Kennedys were thought to have brought America a missing sophistication, New Labour's role has been to bring Britain a missing ingenuousness. Sincerity, earnestness, gaucherie, a pervasive lack of irony, including a lack of self-irony—these are the marks of New Labour's official style.

EFFECTIVE governing styles, like effective artistic styles, work because they manage to gloss over, or reconcile at the level of appearance, deep contradictions. The contradiction to be reconciled in the New Labour style may be that between the prosperity of British life and the revulsion that the intellectual classes had come to feel at the Conservative government that brought about that prosperity.

On the night of the election, for instance, the English playwright, author, and barrister John Mortimer was attending a performance of "King Lear" in the new production starring Ian Holm. "He is naked in the heath scene, so I took my glasses off, because I didn't want to abuse his privacy," Mortimer recalls. "Then, as the play came to an end, Edgar uttered those extraordinary last lines 'Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say,' and I felt an enormous relief, because at last we could. We had been so immersed in the need to win that we had been almost silent, afraid to speak frankly for fear of upsetting things—not criticizing Labour, either, reluctant to say anything we felt. And suddenly we could, and that night began this extraordinary flowering of emotion and feeling."

The depth of the emotion is real, even if a little puzzling to an outsider. In "Lear," after all, what is to be spoken includes the court's reaction to seeing the kingdom divided in three, a civil war raging throughout the land, one old man blinded and another left to wander on the heath. The worst you can say about the Major regime is that it was uninspiring: people got to keep their eyes, their clothes, and, for the most part, their little kingdoms.

Hugo Young, in his biography of Thatcher, points out that the intellectual classes in London not only were never reconciled to Thatcherism, even though they benefitted from it in many ways, but came to have a deep hatred for its style. In part, this was purely economic: subsidized artists and intellectuals were not enthusiastic about a subsidy-cutter; their little kingdoms were threatened. But the hatred of Thatcher and Thatcherism was even more heartfelt, perhaps, among those intellectuals who most obviously thrived during the Thatcher years. Alan Bennett's diaries, Salman Rushdie's criticism, Mike Leigh's movies—all are nearly incandescent with rage at the Tory dispensation. The circumstances were not at all like those in the America of the eighties, where the bulk of American intellectuals disliked Ronald Reagan but were mostly bewildered by him. Thatcher was hated with a passion so overpowering that English art, and particularly the English novel, was in certain ways contorted by it. There is no major, sympathetic Thatcher-era novel, sympathetic in the sense that "Rabbit at Rest" is a Reagan-era novel—an account of what it felt like to be in harmony with the national order. (Although John Mortimer maintains that the Thatcherite protagonist of his "Paradise Postponed" series is meant to be partly sympathetic, it is difficult for the outsider to find just where the sympathy resides.) Philip Larkin's reputation has still not recovered from his merely liking Mrs. Thatcher.

On the left, the contempt for Thatcher expressed itself most disturbingly in a sniffy disdain for the small businessmen and *commerçants*—the "hire-car salesmen and estate agents"—who had displaced the old Tory guard. Left-wing criticism of Thatcher came to embrace the paternalistic deference values it claimed to despise; her most vehement critics became, almost willy-nilly, the inheritors of the most reactionary attitudes.

Even now, it is hard to get New Labourites to admit that Thatcherism was responsible for the social transformation that made New Labour possible. Thatcher is the ghost who keeps appearing on the battlements. It is not unusual for a New Labourite to express feelings of hope, possibility, and escape, to deny any admiration for Thatcher or Thatcherism—and only later, in unofficial conversation, to relate, anecdotally, how necessary the Thatcherite dispensation was. Melvyn Bragg, the television personality and controller of arts for London Weekend Television, recalls, "In the TV industry in the late seventies and early eighties—as in the newspaper industry—both unions and management seemed to be in a mad deadlock. For example, because of trade-union rules, I would be forced to take out two or three electricians on a bright sunny day, even if I was doing no shots indoors and no shots that required any electricians in any capacity whatsoever. And it came off my budget." A commentator writing last December in the *Independent*, the once superb and still generally excellent paper that was started up as a result of the overthrow of the press unions, asked, in genuine wonder, how anyone with a normal share of virtue and intelligence could be a Tory. The *Independent*, of course, would not have existed without Mrs. Thatcher.

The intellectual left hated Thatcherism because it seemed so philistine. Yet the Thatcherite indifference to culture, the separation of the cultural classes from power, had the paradoxical effect of allowing a certain eccentric freedom. It was, after all, under Thatcher, and at the hands of one of Thatcher's most powerful campaign advisers, that the Saatchi Collection, the most ambitious private museum of cutting-edge art in the world, got built and prospered. All those radical innovators in fashion and music prospered, too—partly out of sheer resistance to the government. But, if there is a reliable rule of cultural evolution in the world, it is that energetic entrepreneurial societies with no official program for culture tend to be more hospitable to avant-garde art. Lorenzo de' Medici, we now know, was magnificent because he wasn't a patron of the arts in the sense of having a program or a strong set of views about pictures. He was just glad to see people making money and spending it the way they wanted to. It seems likely that New Labour's cultural choices will be more mainstream and corporatist, just because they will be conscious choices. New Labour's monument may be Richard Rogers' new dome for the millennium exposition, to be built in Greenwich. It's an inspired design, but more typical of a French *grand projet* than of the small, eccentric entrepreneurial culture of London over the past decade—more Eiffel than Vivienne Westwood. (A Labour government might have been much more, and even cripplingly, "responsible" about the effect of one more Shakespeare theatre, like the new Globe, on the already crowded and subsidy-starved classical-theatre scene.)

DESK WORK, AFTER HEARING BAD NEWS

I could use the stapler to staple
my eyes shut. That hurt would help

me cope with the sunlit young woman,
bursting at her seams, her angel

face totalled in an accident
prompted by a party. The squeal

before the thud, the squeal before
the thud is all she remembers

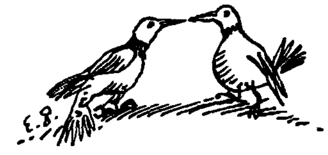
in these early days of after.
Is her loss just surface or something

deeper? The mirror sets the table
for the rest of our lives, but others

see us more than we will ever see
ourselves. Tonight, we dine on shards.

—DAVID BRESKIN

THERE are people in London who argue that the London boom bears little relation to Thatcherism, and really depends on the accident of history that resulted in North America's being English-speaking. Albert Scardino, an American journalist who lives in England, says, "The key to London right now has nothing to do with Tony Blair being Jack Kennedy. It has a lot more to do with Marlowe and Shakespeare. The thing is, *the English do English*." London could become the software capital of Europe, and it is already the financial capital, in part because of American linguistic insularity. ("Frankfurt would be a more logical place," one financial guru says, "but it's too much trouble for Americans to put the verb at the end of the sentence.") Roy Jenkins notes that one of the overlooked turning points of modern history is the unglamorous international-air-control agreement, which recommended English as the language of international air control. For the first time in an international domain, the dominance of English was codified.



The openness to American enterprise among the British élite—Microsoft has just announced plans to open its first European research center, in Cambridge—goes hand in hand with the Anglicization of the élite in New York: to the English-speaking imperium goes an upper-middle-class dispensation. This can create an illusion of equality, and, since the English-speaking imperium began in England, even of dominance. And yet the inequality of scale and size built into the relationship between England and America is the same as it has been since the Second World War. The new English-speaking imperium is very hard to distinguish from the old American Empire. "We have gone from being an imperial country to being a provincial society without ever being a modern society," one New Labourite announces. It's an impressive-sounding formula. But what *is* a modern society? "Modern" has always meant, at least in part, "American," and now, with an increasingly troubled European Union, "modern" means hardly anything else. London these days seems like an "exciting" city to Americans because we think America is exciting.

Thatcher was once accused by Labour of "Americanizing" Britain through allowing brutal extremes of rich and poor, and through encouraging the privatization of what had once been common property. But Thatcher never really succeeded in Americanizing her party: it remained too stubbornly insular to be anything but English. It may be the New Labour era, if not New Labour itself, that, at least on the level of manners and culture, puts the seal on the transformation of London into another American city. The American visitor having dinner at the Fifth Floor, in Harvey Nichols, at eleven-thirty at night may feel a rush of pleasure—this town is hopping—and only afterward realize that it's not pleasure he feels but familiarity. Feels like home—maybe a little too much like home.

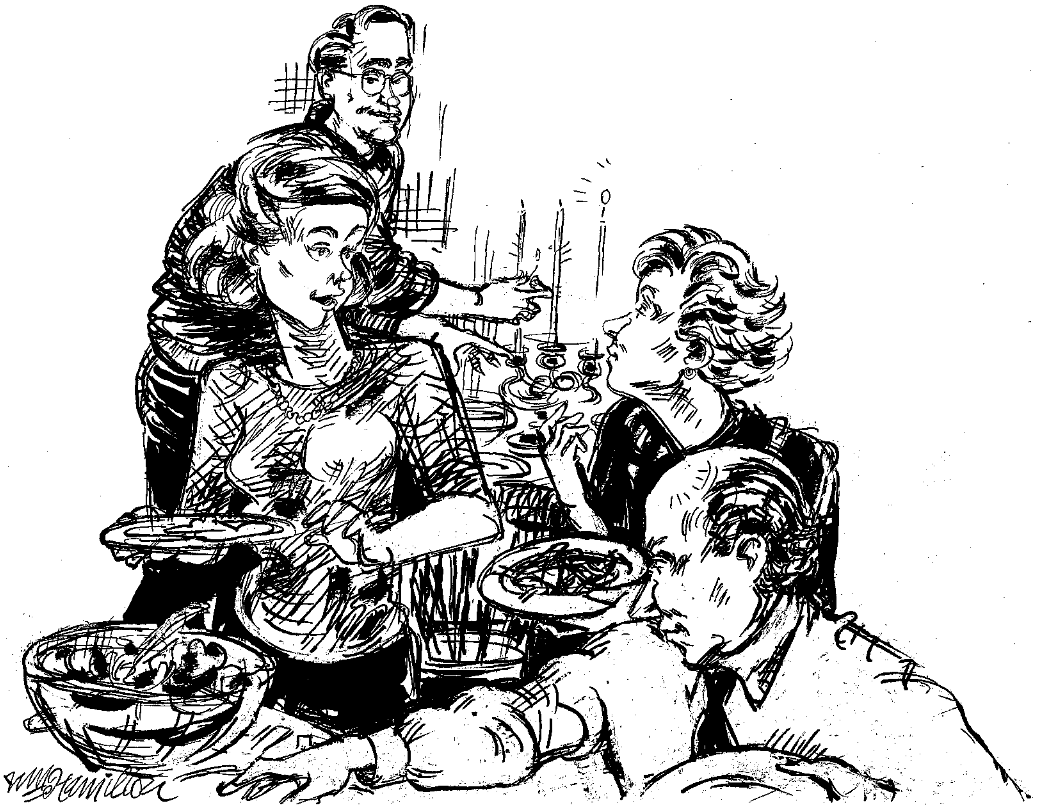
IN a curious way, all these forces—the primacy of the English language, the Americanization of London, and the paradoxes of Europe—seemed to point toward the opening of the Globe. The new Globe is as faithful a replica of the old one as could be constructed, given the paucity of archeological evidence and the propensity of Elizabethan-theatre scholars for insisting that everything that other Elizabethan-theatre scholars believe is wrong. Yet there is nothing ersatz or Disneyish about the finished theatre—the frame was done, Elizabethanly, in wood-and-peg construction. (A decision was even made to wash down the dirt floor in front of the stage before each performance, in order to discourage the groundlings from sitting down.)

A desire to play Shakespeare on a "Shakespearean stage" was already popular in the mid-nineteen-fifties, but the Globe stage turns out to be nothing at all like the "thrust," theatre-in-the round stages built then. Shakespeare's stage—and, if this is not exactly Shakespeare's stage, it is more like it than any other stage we have—doesn't push itself into the audience, confrontationally. That was a Brecht-era reading. Shakespeare's stage is recessive. Only its décor shouts. The Globe stage is a big, awkward-looking rectangle, dominated by two massive faux-marble columns with gilt Corinthian capitals, which support an elaborate wooden canopy. The stage is decorated in late-Renaissance style, in loud, and even garish, taste: the back wall, beneath the canopy, is completely filled with trompe-l'oeil details, shadow boxes, and heralding angels. The acoustics produced by the canopy make the voices fade in and out as the actors move, so the first impression of the reconstructed theatre is weird, and can be actively disagreeable. And the two huge columns act as an obstruction to speaking. At first, you are inclined to wonder if this really is the "stage where Shakespeare wanted us to meet him," as the program puts it, or just the stage where Shakespeare had to meet us, whether he wanted to or not.

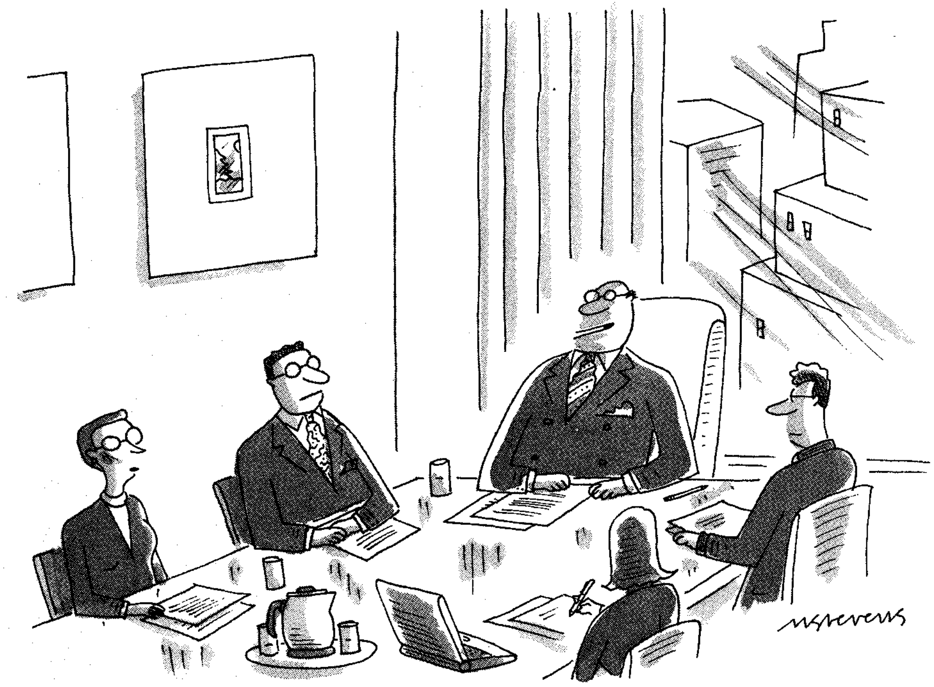
But then its virtues begin to reveal themselves. The first striking thing is that spectators and performers are in the same envelope of weather, and even wind. The actors and audience exist in a common light: the stage lights don't dim, because there are none. To a modern audience, used to having its attention directed—its sense of ceremony underlined, its sense of reverence put in place—by the simple act of "turning on the night," this is disconcerting. It makes Shakespeare in the Globe seem not so much exotically "stylized" as commonplace—less like watching an Orphic mystery than like watching your kid play Little League. The prologues, the narrative interpolations, the rhetorical addresses to the audience—above all, the soliloquies, with an actor stepping right to the lip of the stage and speaking simply and clearly to the audience—for the first time feel natural. *Of course* he's talking to us—we're right here with him.

What the Globe demands is not so much acting in the modern psychological sense as "blocking," the old art of arranging actors in pictures. It is a pictorial space and an oratorical space—a stage where the best thing you can do is stand still and speak up. The viewer realizes what all the garish and unsettling décor demonstrates as historical fact: the Globe is not simply a thatch-and-plaster "Tudor" theatre but a *Renaissance* theatre, an expression of the unified European visual culture of the late sixteenth century. The double columns recall the space of every Italian painting of the Annunciation, every Flagellation of Christ: they force on a director both a frame and a picture. That Shakespeare is not an odd English sport but a participant in a unified European culture is perhaps the most obvious thing to say about a man who wrote plays set mostly in Italy and Burgundy and Denmark, which have occasional scenes written in French, and whose underlying assumption is the unity of European culture. Yet the place of Shakespeare within Renaissance civilization has never seemed so clear as it does at the new Globe.

The irony is that this most American of projects may illuminate England's European identity. The new Globe, apart from demonstrating that what Shakespeare wanted his actors to do was to stand still and speak up, may remind everyone that English culture at its most English was also at its most Continental. The argument has been made that the sense of English distinctiveness



"We're so excited. I'm hoping for a Chinese girl, but Peter's heart is set on a Native American boy."



"The proposal sounds good. Of course, I still have to run it by my people over at the Psychic Friends Network."

• •

is really a product of the Napoleonic period, when England was cut off from the Continent. Only then, the argument goes, did the cosmopolitan society of the eighteenth century become reactionary and inward-turning. The notion of the "Englishness" of Shakespeare, if it was not invented in that period, was hardened in it. (Dr. Johnson, of course, said that all foreigners are fools, but he spoke and wrote French and Dutch, and counted at least two émigré Italians among his friends.) English culture was European almost before it was recognizably English.

THIS is not a lesson likely to be lost on New Labour, since one way of coping with the imbalance between Britain and America is to reëmphasize the role of Europe. "If there were an election tomorrow for European President, Blair would win it easily," one of his intimates says, and this is probably true. Just as behind even the Tories' Europhilia there was always a glimpse of Little England, there is behind the general vein of "Atlanticism" in New Labour a discernible glimpse of renewed international ambition—but set off from any kind of imperial nostalgia. Although 1997 is the centenary of Victoria's Jubilee, the greatest of all imperial displays, almost nothing has been or probably will be made of the anniversary. If New Labour has a single uppercase ambition, it is to create the first post-imperial government in Britain: the first government that doesn't react, positively or negatively, to the imperial tradition—that is indifferent to it, and may even be amnesiac about it.

In this way, small manners and big plans are one. The proof of a post-imperial style, New Labour people argue, will lie in the withering away of England's old system of deference. In an influential leftist manifesto, "The State We're In," Will Hutton, the editor of the *Observer*, made the argument that Britain's economic problems were inseparable from its cultural problems: it was, he said, the semi-feudal system that had handicapped Britain for the past century, creating a "gentlemanly" ideal that cut enterprise off at the knees. Although Hutton's Keynesianism has been rejected by New Labour, this part of his analysis is implicitly accepted. Yet the originality of New Labour in power has been in overthrowing the old system not by attacking the old manners but by ignoring them, or by effortlessly putting a new set in their place.

Blair's embrace of Thatcher as a model has a meaning that goes beyond acceptance of her economics. "They are both instinctive social radicals," someone said about them. Although Blair is commonly thought to have rejected social Thatcherism, while accepting a modified economic Thatcherism, it may be his embrace of an element of social Thatcherism that matters most of all. This is the side of Thatcherism that genuinely hated the accumulated burden of deference that weighed down British society, and made her unacceptable to the old Tory Party. One small sign of this radicalism in the New Labour manner has been the partial eclipse, as a cause of either scandal or even much comment, of the Royals. "They are suddenly no longer the first family," one New Labourite says. In fact, the Waleses and the Windsors have been chasing Blair: the Prince is trying to make a kind of compact in compassionate governing, while the Queen has invited the Blair family to Balmoral. (The Blairs have accepted but said they won't bring the kids—itself a significant symbol.)

What makes New Labour exciting is that it seems likely to succeed with its uppercase ambition. The lowercase ambitions—reform of the educational system, of the financial system, of the health service—are either too technical or just too complex to be amenable to a simple legislative solution, and they will, inevitably, flop. But the ambition to break the hold of a paralyzing system of post-imperial social restraint, to make naïve optimism fashionable, may have already been achieved.

"The Herbal Bed," a good new play about an incident in the life of Shakespeare's daughter, has been a hit in the West End this season, after being transferred from Stratford. Susanna Shakespeare, it seems, married the local doctor, whose depth of knowledge and commitment to his position overwhelm the obvious limitations of his era—the fact that the herbs he tends and brews so assiduously can't cure anyone of anything. The doctoring is all in the attitude. Politics are herbal medicine, too. The cures they work come only from the authority of the doctor's manner and the patient's willingness to believe that he is not defined by what ails him and that there is really no good reason not to feel better about feeling better. ◆

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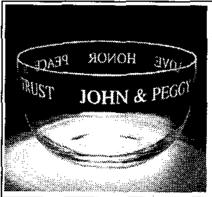

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THE POLITICAL SCENE

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Why the Paula Jones story changed again.

BY JANE MAYER

IN the spring of 1994, when Paula Jones first brought charges against President Clinton, she was widely dismissed as a gold-digging political pawn. That perception changed last November, when a long article by Stuart Taylor, Jr., in *The American Lawyer*, argued that Jones's case was a strong one—far stronger than Anita Hill's—and that the liberal political community's failure to embrace her, as it had embraced Hill, "derived not from evidence, but from ideological bias." Taylor asserted that "hypocrisy" and "class bias" had kept feminists, liberals, and the media from taking Jones seriously, and the charge apparently stung: a wave of self-criticism swept through the press, prompting sympathetic revisitations of Jones's case on ABC's "Nightline" and CBS's "60 Minutes," among other news outlets. *Newsweek*, for its part, recently put an arresting photograph of Jones, wearing a tailored blue dress and pearls, on its cover, with the headline "I WANT HIM TO ADMIT WHAT HE DID."

By the time Taylor's article appeared, a number of factors had opened the way for the wave of pro-Paula Jones revisionism. The White House had issued vague, nonresponsive denials, and it had begun settlement discussions with Jones's attorneys. When those discussions failed, the President's lead counsel, Robert Bennett, had switched to a strategy of delay, in order to keep what obviously would have been a politically perilous trial from taking place before the elections. Clinton's image as a womanizer also gave credence to Jones's allegations—an image that had been reinforced by salacious stories that Arkansas state troopers had told to the press.

Now the Paula Jones story appears to be changing again. This is due, in part, to an aggressive attempt by the Clinton defense team to reshape public opinion. Last week, Bennett went on national television to impugn the motives of the troopers, who, he suggested, were selling "dirt" for money. And information is beginning to surface from more unexpected quarters that raises questions both about Jones's account of her meeting with Clinton and about the state troopers' financial motivations in publicizing unflattering stories about the President. In addition, one of Jones's defense lawyers, Daniel Traylor, told me last week that he was planning to quit his law practice, partly because of his experience with the Jones case. Stuart Taylor also modified his defense somewhat, in a piece in last week's *Legal Times* entitled "New Disclosures Could Cloud Jones' Credibility."

Jones's suit had its origins three and a half years ago, with the publication of David Brock's exposé of Clinton's alleged infidelities in the January, 1994, issue of *The American Spectator*. In one paragraph of Brock's account, an unnamed Arkansas state trooper, acting at the request of then Governor Clinton, purportedly brings a woman, identified only as Paula, to Clinton's room in Little Rock's Excelsior Hotel for what the trooper implies is a sexual encounter. No more than an hour later, Paula emerges from the room and suggests to the trooper that, in Brock's words, she is "available to be Clinton's regular girlfriend."

Some months after Brock's article appeared, Jones sued both the President and the trooper, whom she identified as Danny Ferguson. Her complaint contends that, far from having engaged in a consensual act, she had no idea that Clinton had sexual designs on her and went to his room only because she thought that he might offer her a better job. She was horrified, her complaint states, when, instead, he made a crude sexual advance, one that she characterized as a violation of her civil rights. She told several friends and family members about the encounter soon afterward, and they have corroborated her claim that she was deeply upset by it.

The story shifted again last week, when Ferguson's credibility, which is at the center of the case, was subjected to new accusations, this time levelled by one of Clinton's most dogged political foes, an Arkansas lawyer named Cliff Jackson. According to Jackson, Ferguson was one of a handful of troopers who, after Clinton won the Democratic nomination in 1992, thought that they could make a lot of money by collaborating on a book about Clinton's private life. Ferguson broke away from the group when, at Jackson's urging, the others decided simply to take their stories to the press. The reason, Jackson says, is that Ferguson still harbored hopes of making a fortune from his stories about Clinton. Jackson told me that Ferguson made an "explicit statement" that he would not sign a release giving the troopers' information to the media unless he was promised a million dollars.

Paula Jones's attorney Daniel Traylor says that he's quitting his law practice partly because of his disillusionment with the case.

LEFT PHOTO: REUTERS/BRUCE YOUNG/ARCHIVE PHOTOS; RIGHT PHOTO: CHRIS KLEPONIS/ZUMA

It may seem baffling that Jackson, who had been Clinton's rival since they were both students at Oxford, and who tried to derail Clinton's candidacy by releasing damaging details about his efforts to evade the draft, should now be turning on Ferguson. But, by revealing Ferguson's financial interest, Jackson is siding with Jones, who has also attacked the trooper's credibility.

A second person involved in the troopers' book negotiations, Lynn Davis—a lawyer and former state-police chief to whom they went for advice—says that his memory is hazy, but he acknowledges that Ferguson might have made the million-dollar demand, that "it would not have been out of character." Bill Bristow, Ferguson's lawyer, told me that he had never heard this, but said that he would check with his client. A day later, after talking with Ferguson, Bristow said they would have no comment on the story. I told him that it sounded as if he were refusing to deny it. "I'm not confirming it or denying it," Bristow said. "I'm just not commenting."

Even if Ferguson hoped to make a big score by selling unflattering stories about Clinton, it doesn't mean that those stories, including his account of the meeting with Paula Jones, are false. But Jackson's account does suggest a previously unknown financial interest, and an incentive for Ferguson to make his story as marketable as possible. There is no indication that Ferguson ever succeeded in any such goal. In fact, Bristow says that, as events have unfolded, "this is certainly not something that has been good for Danny Ferguson."

The troopers' get-rich scheme was further outlined by Ronald A. Anderson, another Arkansas state trooper, who made headlines last week when he told Bob Woodward, of the Washington *Post*, that investigators working with the Whitewater independent counsel, Kenneth Starr, had asked him for information about President Clinton's alleged affairs. Anderson authorized the release of an affidavit that Clinton's lawyers had taken from him in 1994 and that raises questions about the veracity of all the troopers' stories. Anderson, who was a member of Governor Clinton's security detail, admits in his affidavit that in early discussions with other troopers about the proposed book he confirmed stories concerning Clinton's marital infidelity, even though he knew those stories "to be untrue" or had no first-hand knowledge of the events. He does not, by any means, discredit all the stories, but he does say that many "were nothing more than old fish tales, with little, if any, basis in fact."

Anderson, who last week was on vacation and unavailable for comment, participated in this deception, he says in the affidavit, because after the 1992 Democratic Convention he, like Ferguson, believed that his intimate knowledge of candidate Clinton might prove profitable. Anderson says that the troopers were told by Lynn Davis that such a book might earn them as much as two and a half million dollars. When I asked Davis about this last week, he laughed and said, "In the past three or four years, I've heard all kinds of figures." He did, however, confirm that he had worked with the troopers on a potential book deal.

By late 1993, Anderson states, Cliff Jackson had grown impatient with the slowness of the book preparations. Clinton was doing well politically—he had succeeded in passing a budget and tax bill, and his health-care initiative was still popular—and Jackson was anxious to get the troopers' devastating accounts published without delay. He urged the troopers to sign a contract releasing their stories to approved writers at *The American Spectator* and the Los Angeles *Times*. In exchange for giving up their book plans and subjecting themselves to possible recriminations, Anderson claims, Jackson promised the troopers jobs outside Arkansas "for seven years at an annual salary of a hundred thousand dollars."

When I spoke to Davis and Jackson last week, both of them denied the specific publishing arrangements cited by Anderson. But they did say that they had worked with the troopers on marketing their stories to the public, and had discussed helping the troopers find new jobs should their employment be jeopardized by their revelations about the President. (Two other troopers mentioned in Anderson's affidavit did not return phone calls.) Jackson added that he doesn't see himself as an enemy of Clinton's, although he would like the world to know about what he calls Clinton's "misuse of the troopers as pimps."

In the end, Anderson says in his affidavit, he refused to sign Jackson's release, partly on account of his concern over what he calls the "lies and inaccuracies" in the other troopers' stories. Notwithstanding Anderson's scruples, the troopers' stories made it into the press, became an indelible part of anti-Clinton folklore and late-night comedy monologues, and, not least, precipitated Paula Jones's suit.

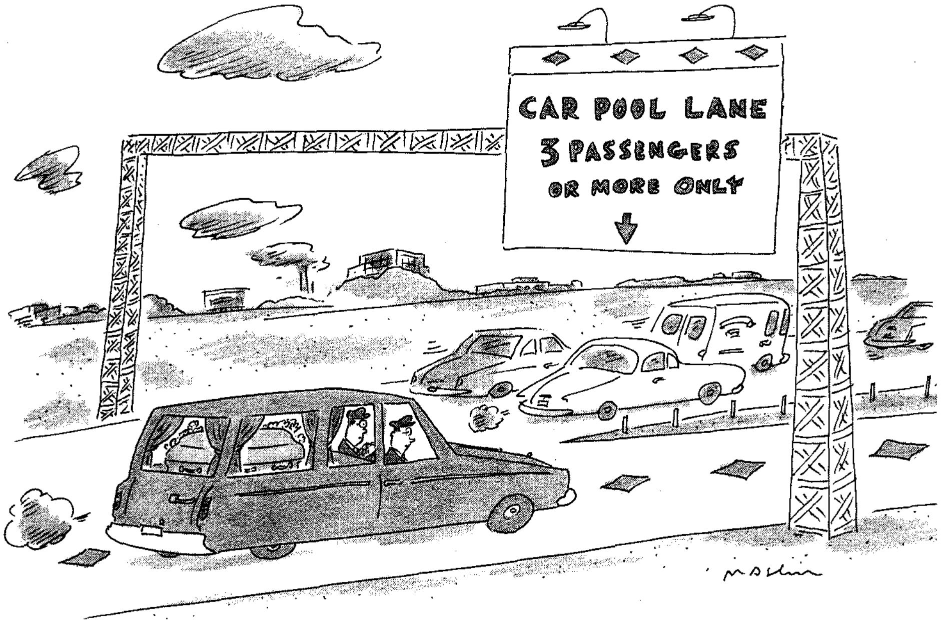
AMONG the oddest of the recent odd turns in the Paula Jones story is the disillusionment of her attorney Daniel Traylor. Traylor, who met Jones through a mutual friend, was the first lawyer to take her case. In May, 1994, however, after Traylor had proved to everyone involved, including himself, that he did not have the expertise for a case of this nature (his specialty is real-estate law), he and Jones decided that she should seek other lead counsel, and he assumed the role of local counsel. Then, last week, he announced that he planned to resign from the case. Before the two lead lawyers on the Jones defense team told him not to comment further, Traylor agreed to speak with me, in his office, in a rundown garden apartment in Little Rock. During a rambling two-hour interview, he talked about Jones's case with surprisingly critical candor. Traylor, who technically still represents Jones, told me that it was a mistake for him to have taken the case. "I'm not sure I did the right thing," he said, in a thick Southern accent, "or exercised good judgment. I fear probably not." (Traylor is a Democrat and voted for Clinton in 1992, and he said sadly that he had been ostracized in Little Rock for his involvement with Jones.) In particular, Traylor said, he regrets his decision to approach the White House, in early 1994, with what he believed to be a well-intentioned settlement. He discussed keeping Jones's complaint quiet in exchange for a private apology from Clinton, a small amount of money to cover his legal fees, and, possibly, jobs for Jones and her husband. The White House rejected the offer, and Traylor now fears that it has left him open to charges of extortion.

Traylor told me that he had also been bothered by the fact that Jones had never denied to him Ferguson's statement that he had approached her by saying, "The Governor said you make his knees knock." Traylor said, "It just troubled me that she never denied that." If the encounter began on such a flirtatious note, it might belie her claims that she visited the Governor's hotel room only for business reasons.

Traylor added that Jones did not tell him that Clinton had shown her "distinguishing characteristics" on his genitals. The first time he heard of this was after she went out to dinner with her lead lawyers, Joseph Cammarata and Gilbert K. Davis. "It was elicited in their interview with Ms. Jones when I was out of the room. In my many hours of interviews with her, I never elicited that," he says. Cammarata and Davis have pointed out that perhaps Traylor never asked the right question, and Traylor admits that the fault may have been his. Nevertheless, the defense can now argue that Jones's story has been embellished over time.

And Traylor had been upset with Jones for accepting a thousand dollars from a conservative religious filmmaker who had made an anti-Clinton video called "The Clinton Chronicles." (According to *Legal Times*, the money may have been merely a donation to Jones's legal defense.) Traylor told me that the payment "soured me on the Joneses. I didn't want anything to do with that trash. These people were now on the nut circuit. . . . It's hokey, and all political. This heightened my anxiety about them as clients."

Finally, Traylor divulged details about how he had become entangled with Cliff Jackson. Knowing that Jackson represented a number of the state troopers, Traylor says he initially contacted him in order to convey Jones's anger at Ferguson's "Paula" anecdote in *The American Spectator*. Jackson told him that he did not represent Ferguson, but that he would be interested in hearing more about Jones's claims against Clinton. Soon afterward, Jackson persuaded Traylor to make Jones's claims public at a conservative political convention—a move that hurt her credibility but served Jackson's political ends. "When I got up there and I saw and smelled all those Republicans," Traylor said, "I got worried." (Jackson remembers Traylor as the one who wanted to make the claims public.) Jackson also suggested, according to Traylor, that he get Jones to sign a contract assigning Traylor a portion of any future book or movie profits. Jackson denies doing so. The contract, Traylor said, was "modelled" on Jackson's contract with the state troopers, and Jackson faxed him some of the language he had used.



IN addition, two women, both of whom were friendly with Jones, have come forward with recollections of talking to her soon after she returned from the alleged encounter at the Excelsior Hotel. They say that Jones, far from being upset, was elated by Clinton's attentions. One of the women, Pam Hood, an office colleague of Jones's at the Arkansas Industrial Development Corporation, where Jones's nickname was Betty Boop, likened Jones's excitement at having met Clinton to the "bubbly enthusiasm" she had shown on an earlier occasion, when she had caught a glimpse of Arnold Schwarzenegger in Little Rock. Hood says she dislikes being involved in the case, and will testify only if she is subpoenaed.

I LIE AWAKE EACH MORNING WATCHING LIGHT

Grow inch by inch in the bedroom and beyond the window,
seeing the gray outlines of strangeness settle into their
familiar selves: dock posts, gables, stairs, squat half barrels
brimming with flowers, a few dishevelled geraniums
gleaming near water. Slowly, then, the ocean assembles itself
out of that lapping shadow it was in the dark, while cracks
of rosy light appear and disappear in the cloud ceiling.

When it's time in here I blunder about, feeling in the half-dark
for glasses, clothes, socks, slippers among the blunt stubs
of furniture, still at sea as I am in the gnawing bad thoughts
that brought an end to sleep: inch by slow inch the light grows
to gray morning while I stay in the dark, watching a single
fishing boat take to the open sea, one lamp blazing at mast top.

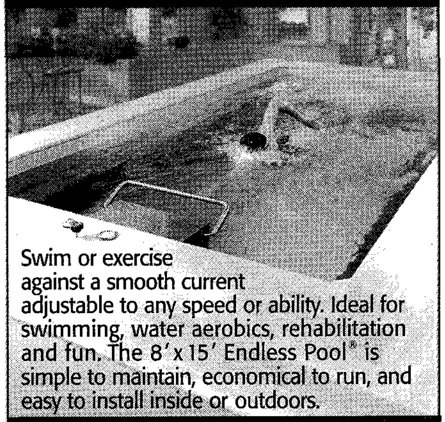
—EAMON GRENNAN

Another potential witness for the defense is Carol Phillips, who operated the switchboard at the Governor's office. She recalls that Jones, who acted as a daily courier to the Governor's office, told her "in a happy and excited manner" that a state trooper had arranged for her to meet Clinton in his hotel room. Jones, according to an affidavit sworn to by Phillips, "characterized Mr. Clinton as 'gentle,' 'nice' and 'sweet.'" Phillips says that Jones started making longer visits to her office, which was right outside the Governor's, placing hopeful calls to see if Clinton might be in when she planned to drop by, checking the Governor's parking space, and asking the troopers to tell her his whereabouts.

Of course, nothing would have required Jones to divulge her distress to everyone she knew. But it cannot help her case if acquaintances like Hood and Phillips are ready to testify not only that she did not appear traumatized by her encounter with Clinton but that she was positively giddy about it.

ALL this would appear to be good news for the Clinton defense, and so it may be—from a narrowly legal point of view. But what is legally exculpatory can still be politically damaging. An inescapable implication of the new disclosures questioning Jones's version of events is that there *were* events—that *something* happened at the Excelsior Hotel between Bill Clinton and Paula Jones, even if it was no more than a handshake and a friendly chat. But Clinton and his handlers have famously denied that the President has any "recollection" of Jones, and that he was ever "alone in a hotel" with her—semantic constructions that may be technically true but smell a little misleading. (Recollections are mutable, since memories can be refreshed. And no person—no couple, either, for that matter—is ever fully "alone in a hotel" as long as there is so much as a night clerk drowsing at the front desk.)

Before the election, it would have cost Clinton dearly to have been forced to take refuge in the argument that Jones was not as upset by his attentions as she claims to have been. Perhaps that is why some of the most persuasive "pro-Clinton" evidence has only recently begun to leak out. But, even with the election safely out of the way, political danger remains: witness the firestorm over Bennett's recent indication that he planned to be as aggressive in exposing Jones's sexual past as the plaintiffs planned to be in exposing Clinton's. With each new twist, it appears clearer that, no matter what the merits of Jones's case, it presents an enormous political embarrassment to all concerned—to those among Clinton's opponents who have tried underhandedly to profit from it, and to the target of their attacks, who, after all, owes his reëlection to the gender gap. Whether or not the case goes to trial, Traylor, the disenchanted lawyer, may be right in predicting that, in the end, "there will be no winners." ◆



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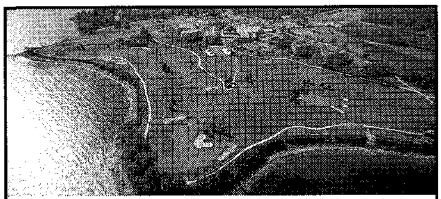

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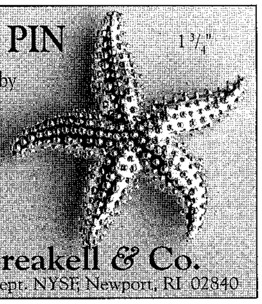

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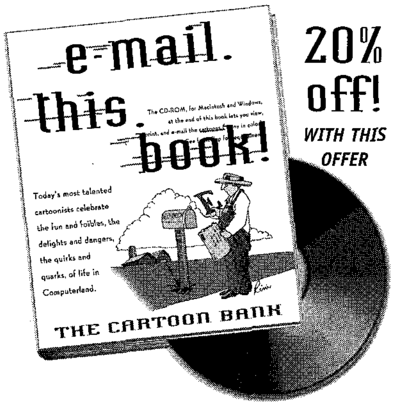
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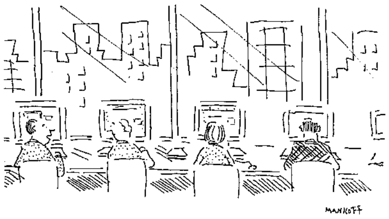


"The e-mail isn't functioning—pass it on."

THE SKY LINE

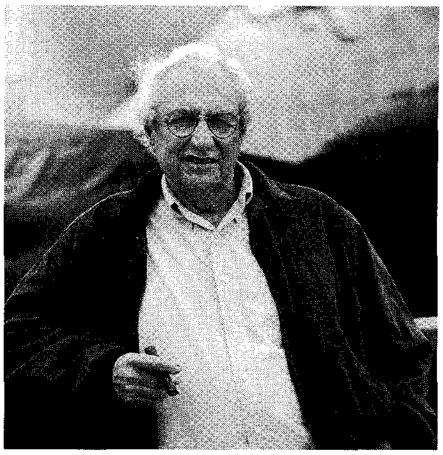
THE MAVERICK

Why is Frank Gehry a genius everywhere but in his own home town?

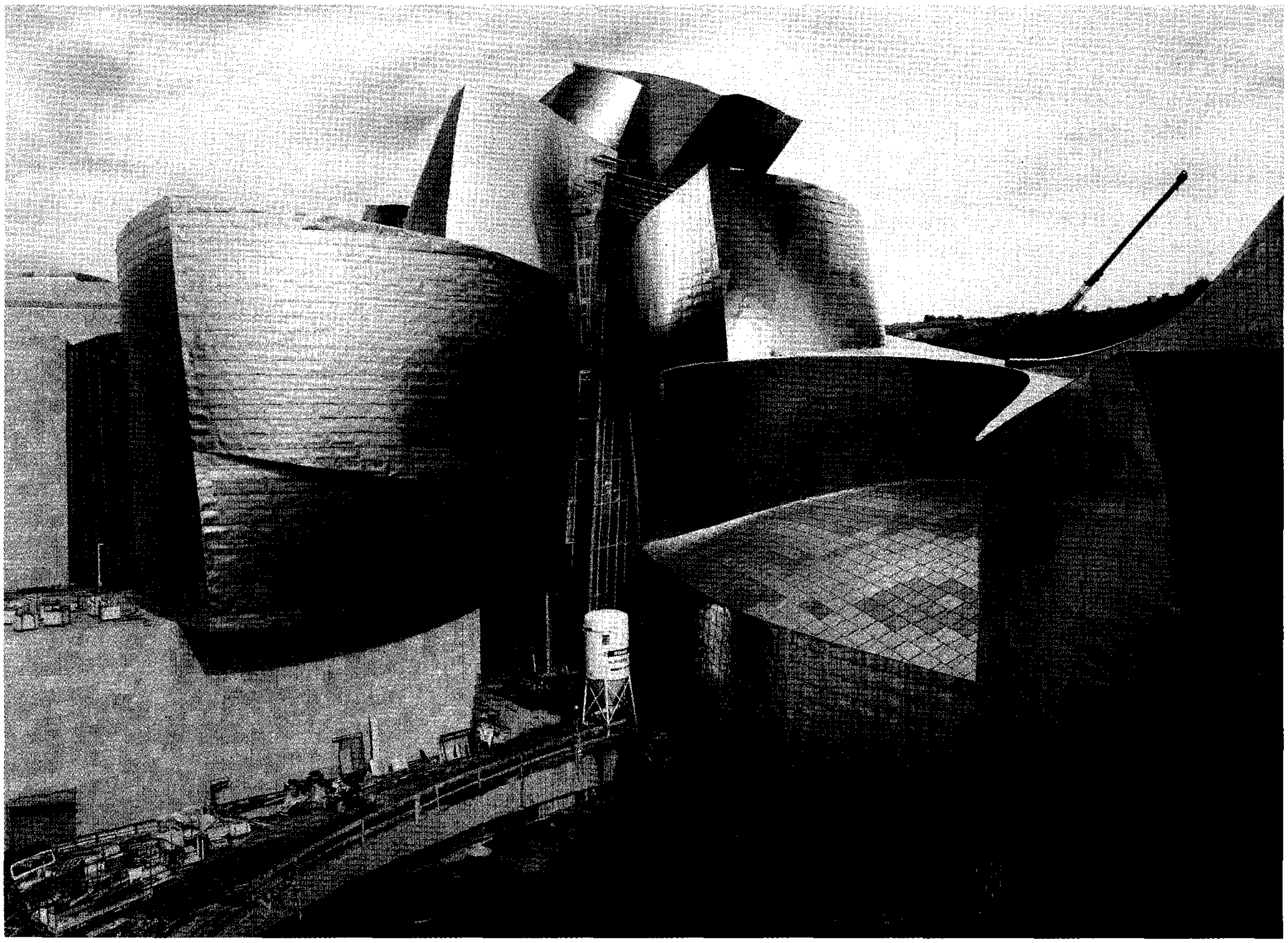
BY CALVIN TOMKINS

THE Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, won't sit still for its portrait. Approached from the center of town, on the Alameda de Mazarredo, it bursts into view as an eruption of powerful forms held in check by a cloak of titanium—a metal that does not so much reflect the light as capture it and send it back altered, in a range of tones from bright silver to deep, purplish gray. The exhilarating jolt of that first view is repeated as you move around the building's exterior and watch the forms shift and recombine. From across the Nervión River it looks like a fantastic dream ship, all sails full, sweeping upstream into the center of sombre nineteenth-century Bilbao; walk two blocks farther and it starts to resemble some prehistoric beast, advancing with one huge leg and foot toward the water. Although its formal opening will not take place until October, the building has been hailed as a masterpiece—the crowning achievement of California's irrepressible Frank Gehry, whom a number of critics, and even some fellow-practitioners, consider to be the most original architect in the world today.

Picking his way through the vast atrium and into the museum's unfinished galleries on a chilly spring afternoon, Gehry, a short, energetic man with tousled white hair and a bearing that manages to be both informal and eager, finds flaws in his building. He is unhappy about a wall in one of the irregularly shaped galleries on the second floor. He had designed this wall to slant outward a few degrees, but the Spanish contractors made it perpendicular; though he pointed this out to them several times and they kept promising to change it, they never did, and now it's too late. "If that wall sloped just three or four degrees," he explains, "it would cradle you, it would be warmer and friendlier. You'd feel better in the space." Gehry wants his buildings to be accessible and unexpected and provocative, on the inside as well as on the outside, and to the degree that they are all these things they can be seen to reflect their creator. Gehry is an engaging man, warm and friendly and seemingly at ease with himself and the world, but he can also be very tough. Back home in Los Angeles, he recently went public in his long-simmering dispute with Eli Broad, the businessman and art collector who is leading a new fund drive for the financially troubled Walt Disney Concert Hall—the biggest commission that Gehry has ever had in his own city. Rather than acquiescing in what he considered a serious threat to his design process for the sake of cutting costs, Gehry fired off a letter to Broad in which he formally withdrew his name from the project. This put Broad on the spot—he could hardly afford to let Gehry resign from his own building—and the outlook is for a protracted power struggle between two men who neither like nor trust each other.



Gehry's life these days has become a tale of two cities: trouble in Los Angeles, offset by triumph in Bilbao. The Museo Guggenheim Bilbao, whose design is somewhat similar to and just as complex as Disney Hall's, has been completed on time and within its hundred-million-dollar budget. The Basque regional government, which is paying to build and maintain the museum, invited the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation to run the program and provide the art, and this enabled Thomas Krens, the director of the Guggenheim Museum in New York and a man with fully developed opinions on architecture and everything else, to assume the role of the architectural client. Aside from a few minor quibbles, Krens and Gehry and Juan Ignacio Vidarte, the Basque director of the museum, worked together with remarkable harmony, and Krens's main program requirement—that it be one of the greatest buildings of the twentieth century—has been, in his opinion, amply fulfilled.



The architect (left) has received physical threats and has had his windows shot out over his radical constructions, including the most recent, the Guggenheim Museum in Spain (above). Photographs by Robert Polidori.

The hope of the Basque project managers is that the new museum will put Bilbao on the cultural map of the new Europe. The local authorities decided ten years ago that Bilbao's best course would be to offset its decline as a center of shipbuilding and heavy industry by investing in culture. (The city is also putting up a large new concert and convention hall, and it commissioned Sir Norman Foster to design a new subway system.) The current projection of half a million visitors a year for the Guggenheim Bilbao may be optimistic, but the Basques are very keen on the international attention their museum has been getting. There are some dissenters, of course. A Basque sculptor named Jorge Oteiza was so upset by Gehry's radical design that he threatened physical violence against the architect. "I could relate to that," Gehry told me. "I feel sort of the same way when I. M. Pei builds something in Los Angeles."

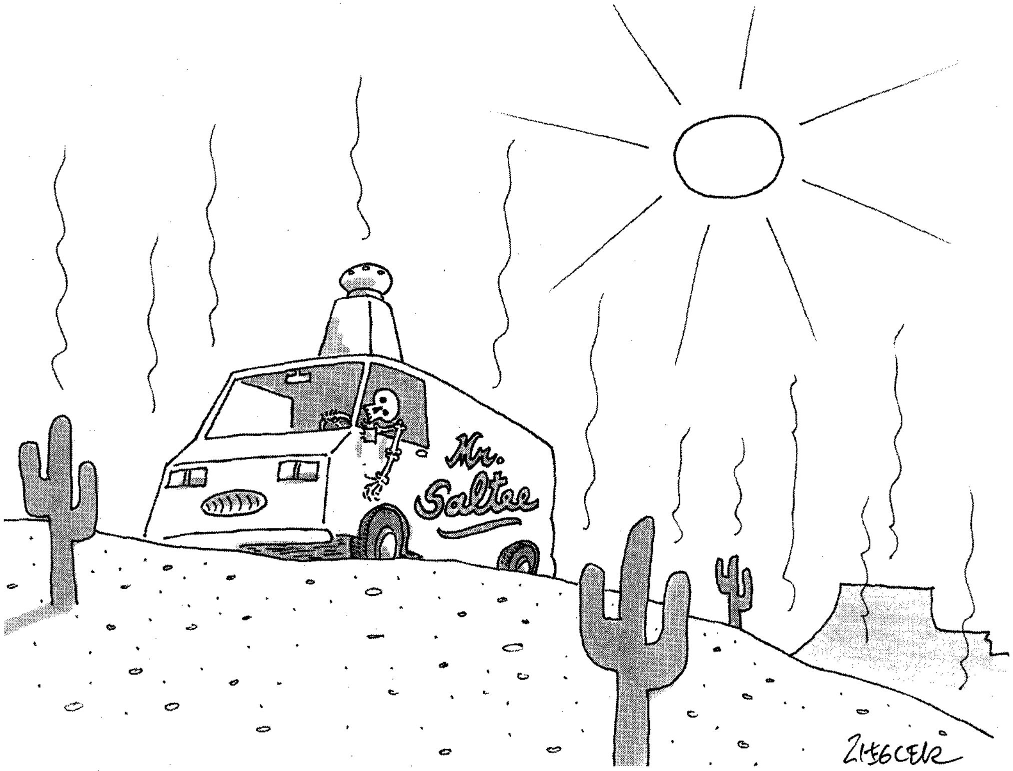
Although the Guggenheim Bilbao will occasionally show work by Spanish artists, its focus will be on European and American modern art, much of which will be there on loan from the Guggenheim in New York. Krens also envisions long-term installations of specially commissioned works by Richard Serra, Francesco Clemente, Jenny Holzer, and other contemporary artists. He believes that most existing museums are seriously out-of-date, in part because their galleries are too small to accommodate the large-scale multimedia works that so many artists want to make these days—the sorts of work that will fit comfortably in the Bilbao museum's largest gallery, a boat-shaped space that is four hundred and fifty feet long by eighty feet wide, with no central supports. More than half the nineteen galleries in the museum are classically square or rectangular, however, and the irregular ones (three of which do have walls that slant) can be converted to conventional proportions if the need arises.

Whether or not the Guggenheim Bilbao will turn out to be a great museum—a first-class environment for showing and experiencing works of art—is a question that won't be answered until October. Calling it a masterpiece before it opens is absurd, according to some critics, but there is an obvious precedent for doing so: Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum, in New York, which is certainly one of the greatest buildings in America, despite being a curator's nightmare. Aside from a spectacular atrium, which is the central element in both museums (Gehry's atrium, a hundred and sixty-five feet high, is half again as high as Wright's), the two buildings have little in common. Wright's is a self-contained dynamo, generating enough energy in its serpentine coils to obliterate everything but the euphoria you feel when you are inside it. Gehry's conveys the experience of productive chaos accepted and embraced—a truly modern experience. It solves the problem of an awkward riverfront site, bordered at one end by a suspension bridge, by annexing the bridge: automobiles crossing the river here travel between the museum proper and its exuberant openwork tower—a purely sculptural, nonfunctional element that can be seen from City Hall, downtown. Gehry himself proposed the site. The Basques had originally wanted to house the museum in a huge nineteenth-century building in the center of town, but Gehry had his hosts take him up on a hill overlooking the city, and he promptly zeroed in on the abandoned industrial area at a bend in the river. The chance to connect a city to its working river by means of a museum of modern art, he said later, "is my idea of heaven."

Far from overpowering or assaulting Bilbao, Gehry's museum fits right into the muscular urban context. Its rugged contours echo the steep hills that surround the city on three sides, and its titanium skin is a warm reminder of the industrial past. Titanium, a natural element used in golf clubs and aircraft landing gear, has a soft, buttery look that Gehry had coveted for years, but it was previously too expensive for building purposes. When the bids went out on the museum, though, the price of titanium had dipped (temporarily) below that of stainless steel, and Gehry grabbed it. Some parts of the building are faced with limestone, but the titanium roof, which runs down over the sides in unbroken, undulating curves, helped Gehry push his architecture closer than ever before to pure sculpture. "It has a tremendous kind of movement, like a new version of Boccioni," his friend Richard Serra, the sculptor, said recently. "He's brought together everything that he's been working on for a lifetime, and then upped the ante. Frank has forced everyone to reassess the potential of architecture."

GEHRY once said that there was something in movement and chaos which fits our present life, and that living in Los Angeles had helped him to tap into it. Los Angeles, however, has never fully reconciled itself to Gehry's work. Although he is certainly California's best-known architect, and the primary inspiration for a generation of innovative West Coast designers, major public commissions in L.A. rarely come his way. He lost out to Japan's Arata Isozaki in the competition to build the Museum of Contemporary Art there; to Richard Meier for the billion-dollar Getty Center (now nearing completion on its hilltop in Brentwood); and to Spain's José Rafael Moneo for the new cathedral that will soon be under construction downtown. In the past, potential clients have avoided him because of his reputation for using chain-link fencing and other ignoble materials, or because he didn't look or act like their idea of a lordly architect. Gehry has always been the antithesis of Richard Meier, who refined an elegant architectural language in pristine white buildings, which all bear the stamp of his signature style. Gehry is consistently unpredictable; his buildings are sui generis, sometimes to a fault. He wears chinos and open-collar shirts, not black suits, and instead of playing tennis or golf he plays ice hockey—rough ice hockey, on a team he organized himself, with his two sons and some ex-college hot shots thirty or forty years younger than he is. But, in spite of his being so outgoing and so unhampered by the sovereign ego that afflicts certain members of his profession, he can be difficult to deal with, especially if you are rich and want him to build your dream house.

Gehry has designed some eminently successful private houses. The one he did in 1989 for the Rockwell Schnabels in Brentwood, with a light-filled atrium living room, and a master bedroom built over a shallow reflecting pool, raises the spirits of anyone who sets foot in it. He doesn't really like to build houses for wealthy people, though, and at least two of his private commissions in recent years have come to grief. With Peter Lewis, a freewheeling Cleveland multimillionaire (auto insurance), it was a case of too much money and too little discipline. Lewis kept changing his mind, and urging Gehry to be more audacious, and what started out as a five-million-dollar house metamorphosed over several years into an eighty-million-dollar project, which got cut back to thirty million and, in the end, didn't get built. Gehry now says that the years he spent on the Lewis house functioned like a MacArthur grant: out of them came ideas that he has used in a number of his subsequent public commissions, such as the computer-generated form—Gehry likens it to "a prehistoric horse's skull"—that will enclose the conference hall of a bank building now under construction in Berlin. It is the only shape that Gehry has ever made on a computer. Although his office is thoroughly computerized, he can't stand to look at a computer screen for more than four minutes at a time. (The horse's head took him three and a half.)



If the problem with Lewis was too much freedom, it was the opposite with Eli Broad, who hired Gehry to build a house for him in 1989, in Brentwood. "Frank did a brilliant job designing the house," Broad told me. "But he did seven different designs. As soon as we'd approve one, he'd start changing it." After two years of this, Broad finally "went ballistic," as he put it, and told Gehry he had three options: finish the house, pay back several hundred thousand dollars in design fees, or go into arbitration. Gehry chose the first option, but on his own terms: he gave Broad a finished model of his most recent design concept and told him to go find another architect to build it.

Gehry says that Broad just didn't understand his design process. In any Gehry project, this process starts with listening to the client—an intense sort of listening that involves paying close attention not only to specific requests but to body language, facial expressions, unfinished thoughts, and other indicators. Having thus uncovered needs and desires that the client might not even have been aware of, Gehry starts making drawings, and the drawings lead to three-dimensional models—dozens of models, more than any other architect would dream of making—until something is produced that resembles what the client has in mind. It's at this point, and not before, that Gehry's design process really kicks in. He plays with the design, pushing it further in model after model, going too far sometimes and having to come back, trying out different ideas, experimenting with forms and relationships, which he is always looking for in strange places (he has found them in the chance juxtapositions of trash in wastepaper baskets, and in the spaces between the people at cocktail parties), and postponing as long as he can the moment when the design finally crystallizes. Gehry was afraid that Broad wouldn't understand this, and for several months, when Broad was trying to hire him, he kept saying no. "When he asked why, I told him to his face that I didn't like him," Gehry recalls. "We'd had one or two encounters before, when he treated me like dirt. I said, 'You're a control freak, you want to know everything, and this process is too intuitive, indeterminate, and flaky for your mind.' " Even so, Broad kept pressing: he said his wife really wanted a Gehry house. Gehry drew up a list of conditions that he was sure would be unacceptable—one of them was that work on public projects would always take precedence over work on Broad's house. Broad agreed to all of them, and Gehry finally gave in.

Broad and his wife loved the first model, according to Gehry, but when Gehry started pushing the design further Broad balked. "He thought I was taking advantage of him," Gehry told me. "He wanted to know why I was unsolving problems that had already been solved, and charging him for unsolving and re-solving them. He thought we were just wasting time." After Broad's ultimatum and Gehry's angry response, Broad got Langdon Wilson, the L.A. firm that had been working with Gehry, to build the house from Gehry's model. Gehry has refused to go and see it. It is not a Gehry house, he says, and if he were to go there people might think it was.

The blowup over the Broads' house can now be seen as a preview of the Disney Hall situation. Both of these events have contributed to Gehry's growing disenchantment with L.A. He often talks of leaving the place and going to live somewhere else. Right now he's thinking about Newport, Rhode Island, but it's hard to imagine him in that stately environment. Los Angeles—with its linear sprawl, its vernacular, bungalow architecture, its genial climate, its laid-back artists, and its openness to fantasies of all kinds—has informed and nurtured Gehry's aesthetic at every turn. Nobody who knows him thinks he will leave L.A., but one of his head designers told me, giving due weight to Gehry's occasional penchant for paranoia, "It wouldn't surprise me if he did."

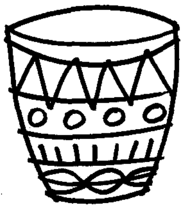
HE wasn't born there, of course—nobody is. Gehry was born in Canada, in 1929. He spent his early years in Toronto and then in Timmins, a gold-mining town in eastern Ontario, where his father had a franchise to supply local restaurants and bars with slot machines, jukeboxes, and pinball games. The family name then was Goldberg. Little Frankie Goldberg was the only Jewish kid in the Timmins grade school; he was called Fishhead and Fishface, and he was beaten up regularly. His best friend when he was growing up was his maternal grandmother, a deeply religious woman, with strange, shamanistic powers and superstitions. "When somebody would look at me funny," he recalls, "she would lick my face. I hated that. But I loved her a lot." His grandmother used to get down on the floor with him to build houses and cities out of wood scraps from his grandfather's hardware store. "That's what I remembered, years later, when I was struggling to find out what I wanted to do in life," he told me. "It made me think about architecture. It also gave me the idea that an adult could play."

When a new law in Canada made slot machines illegal, the Goldberg family moved back to Toronto, where Irving Goldberg, Frank's father, put his meagre savings into a small furniture business that soon failed. "He was a beaten man after that," Gehry says. "My mother and I had to auction off his assets, such as they were." The family—Frank, his parents, and his younger sister, Doreen—moved to Los Angeles in 1947, hoping to better their luck. Irving Goldberg drove a soda-pop truck; Thelma, his wife, went to work in a department store, and eventually became head of the drapery department. Frank got a truck-driving job, too, and kept it for seven years, while he was putting himself through architecture school at the University of Southern California. Just before he graduated, in 1954, at the top of his class, he changed his name to Gehry. Two years earlier, he had married his first serious girlfriend, Anita Snyder; they were expecting a child in the fall (they eventually had two daughters, Leslie and Brina), and Anita was not happy with the name Goldberg. "I was always proud of my name," says Gehry, who still seems pained by this, "but I'd been beaten up as a kid because of it, and at U.S.C. I was told I couldn't get into the architectural fraternity because of it, and my wife didn't like it." It was Anita and her mother who picked the name Gehry. Frank liked the design of it—"those swoops above and below the line"—and he liked being able to keep the initials F.O.G. (the "O" stands for Owen).

A year at the Harvard Graduate School of Design gave Gehry his first exposure to East Coast architects and architectural thinking. The school had three departments—architecture, landscape architecture, and city planning—and Gehry, a militant lefty with strong views on socially responsible architecture, had elected city planning. It was a mistake. City planning seemed to consist of endless group discussions, out of which came an endless flow of paperwork and not much else. He quit, and spent the rest of the year auditing all the Harvard courses that interested him:

music and art and politics and sociology and philosophy as well as architecture. The revelation of his Harvard year was Le Corbusier. The School of Design's architecture department worshipped Corbusier; Josep Lluís Sert, the school's dean, was a dedicated disciple. Gehry, however, discovered the great form-giver through his paintings, which he saw in a small show in Robinson Hall. It suddenly dawned on him that the Ronchamp chapel and all of Corbusier's stunningly original forms came out of his paintings. "That's when I broke through," he told me. "That's when I threw away the grid system and just said, man, there's another freedom out there, and it comes from somewhere else, and that somewhere else is the place I'm interested in."

A LOT of years would go by before he got there. In the meantime, he became a successful commercial architect. In 1962, after three years with Victor Gruen Associates, a large Los Angeles firm, and then a year in Paris, working as a draftsman and going off every weekend to look at buildings by Le Corbusier and others, he opened his own office, in L.A. It was a good time and place for a young architect. Unlike New York, where entry-level jobs were hard to find, Southern California, with its urban sprawl, offered many opportunities for low-budget construction. Gehry did small offices and shops, apartment buildings, housing developments, parks and recreation centers, art-museum installations, and houses for private clients. He also designed furniture—a whole line of funky, lightweight, inexpensive furniture made of laminated cardboard, which he called Easy Edges. Bloomingdale's agreed to handle it at one point, and a full-scale marketing campaign was under way until Gehry, who hadn't quite realized that the campaign would require his active participation as a celebrity designer, cancelled the deal. Later, he designed some larger, shaggier cardboard furniture, which was sold in small quantities for huge prices, and later still, in the early nineties, he produced several dozen models for a line of bentwood furniture, which was marketed very successfully by Knoll.



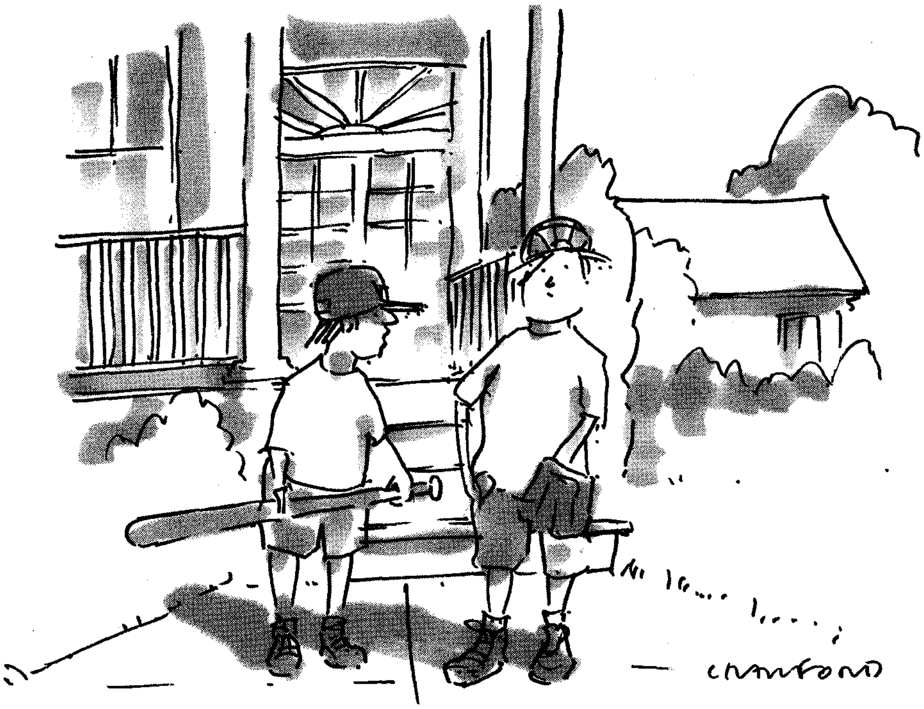
"I was working day and night in the sixties," he told me, "and I was struggling. Struggling financially and struggling with the problem of where I was going and what I was trying to create. At one time I tried to have two offices—a B office, for developer work, and an A office, for work where I could explore things. I talked about this at dinner one night with Harry Cobb, who was in I. M. Pei's office, and he said, 'Frank, you can't do that. It's all one.' He was right, of course." It didn't really become one for Gehry, though, until 1977, when he started renovating (to put it mildly) a house for himself and Berta, his second wife, on a quiet, unsuspecting street in Santa Monica.

It was Gehry's mother who persuaded them to buy a house. Thelma was very fond of Berta, whom Gehry had married in 1975. (His marriage to Anita had broken up in 1967.) Berta, a Panamanian, was attractive, resourceful, humorous, and very smart, and even though she was fourteen years younger than Frank she knew who was going to have to be the adult in their relationship. She wasn't any more inclined to do things for herself than Frank was, though, and Berta and Frank and Alejo, their first son, would probably have stayed on indefinitely in their cramped apartment in Ocean Park if Thelma hadn't gone to work on Berta. What Berta found to buy was a small pink two-story house in a middle-class neighborhood. Gehry has often described it as "a dumb little house," and, in a way, that was what he liked about it: the plain, unpretentious look of a vernacular tradition that he could work with—and against. "I knew the neighbors liked the house, because it was the only two-story house on the block," he told me. "And I liked it, too. I didn't want to destroy it. I thought, If I could build a house around it, so you could look inside and see the old house, there would be some historical continuity for the neighbors, and I could also explore some of the ideas I'd been thinking about."

That reasonable-sounding plan, which accurately describes what Gehry did, led to one of the most unreasonable-looking dwellings in North America. Gehry wrapped the "dumb little house" on three sides in a structure that added about eight hundred square feet to the first floor and transported the original house, openmouthed if not exactly kicking and screaming, into the late twentieth or maybe the twenty-first century. The new structure was made out of the same inexpensive industrial materials he had been using in some of his other projects: corrugated metal, plywood, and chain-link fencing. The kitchen and dining area, which was now situated outside the walls of the old house, had an asphalt floor. Every window in the new part was a different size and shape, and there were a lot of windows, several of them positioned high, so you could look out and see the sky through an existing row of cedars of Lebanon. The old house was clearly visible inside its new wrapping. The original front door, which you encountered immediately after passing through the new front door, was still operative. Other elements were subjected to various degrees of deconstruction. Walls or parts of walls were removed, but the two-by-four studs that had secured them remained in place; between two studs a former window hung intact, like the memory of a former life.

In addition to blurring the distinction between old and new, Gehry wanted to act on his belief, often expressed, that houses look more beautiful when they are being built than when they are finished. By leaving raw studs in place, for example, he was "emphasizing that the details are still in the process—that the building hasn't stopped." The feeling inside is not at all chaotic, although the spatial relationships are so active and unpredictable that you can lose your bearings at times. Gehry will tell you, with evident regret, that the house used to be a lot edgier—and better—before he remodelled it in 1992, to provide a few more comforts for Berta and a room for their second son, Sam. In its early days, there were protests and vituperations from the neighbors, and phone calls and letters to the mayor and to the papers, and on two separate occasions someone fired a bullet through a window. Berta loved the house, however, or said she loved it, or grew to love it, and she and Frank are still there today.

A few of Gehry's artist friends grumbled, when they saw the house, that he had stolen their ideas. Since the sixties, Gehry's best friends had been artists. Ed Moses, Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, Chuck Arnoldi, and others in the very lively Los Angeles artist community liked Gehry a lot: they liked his lack of pretensions, and they were flattered that he took such an active interest in their work. (Robert Irwin, who had a falling-out with Gehry over the cardboard furniture, which he had also worked on, told me recently that Gehry was the only architect he knew who had really looked hard at contemporary art and worked out his own take on it.) Gehry helped some of them build or renovate their own houses or studios, and he was well aware of their liking for unorthodox materials and for leaving things unfinished: if the plumbing looked good when you installed it, why cover it up? Some of Gehry's ideas had certainly grown out of his association with the L.A. artists, whose casual, funky aesthetic often coincided with his own. "Frank was a comrade," Ed Moses told me not long ago, a trifle ruefully, "and damned if he didn't become more prominent internationally than any of us. Who would have expected it—this putzy little guy?"



"I want an eponymous retail empire when I grow up, Greg. What do you want?"

• •

Among the architects who made a point of going to see Gehry's house was Philip Johnson. Always alert to the work of younger architects, Johnson had come several years earlier to see a house that Gehry built for the painter Ron Davis in Malibu—a corrugated-steel trapezoid with a roof that rose from a height of ten feet at one corner to a height of thirty feet at the corner diagonally opposite. Johnson had subsequently invited Gehry to visit him in his famous Glass House, in Connecticut, and he eventually became one of Gehry's most articulate champions. Gehry's buildings "give you a mysterious feeling of delight," he once said. "I wish one could get into words or pictures that double sense of space he's able to get several times in his own house. . . . It's not beauty, or ugliness, either, but a disturbing kind of satisfaction that you don't get in anyone else's spaces." (More recently, when asked whether he thought the Guggenheim Bilbao would be a good place for art, Johnson gave one of his definitive replies: "When a building is as good as that one, fuck the art.")

Gehry had found his true direction, and it nearly did him in. When he built his own house, he was working on Santa Monica Place—a fifty-million-dollar shopping center, whose developer, the Rouse Company, was his most important commercial client. A number of critics think that Santa Monica Place is one of Gehry's best buildings, but Gehry doesn't think so; he felt that too many compromises and changes vitiated the plan, and that the building's only saving feature is its logo—a block-long screen of blue chain-link fencing on which "SANTA MONICA PLACE" is superimposed in white chain-link letters fifty feet high. Not long after the shopping center was finished, the Rouse Company's president, Mathias DeVito, came to the Gehrys' new house for dinner one night. "He sat there and looked around and didn't understand it at all," Gehry recalls. "He said, 'You really like this?' I said, 'Matt, this is the best thing I've ever done.' He said, 'Well, if you like this, then you don't like that'—pointing to the plan for the shopping center—'so why do it?' I told him I didn't really want to, and he said in that case I shouldn't, and I agreed, and we shook hands and said we weren't going to work together anymore. It was a very macho evening. I felt good about it the next day. My office staff was about forty people at that point, but within a month I'd reduced it to three. I started over."

Giving up commercial architecture freed Gehry to pursue the something else that derived from and aspired to the condition of art. There was an immediacy in painting—a freshness, a sense of the thing's having just been made—that he wanted to get into architecture. At Victor Gruen Associates, Gehry had dazzled his superiors with perspectival renderings that were classically perfect and, as he came to feel, glibly deceptive—the finished buildings never looked like that. By 1980, his drawings were spaghettilike scrawls—rapid scribblings that embodied, in rough form, a process of thought. As he once described it, "It's almost like I'm grinding into the paper, trying to find the building. I never think of the drawings as a finished product—they're a process to get to an idea." The ideas he came up with seemed to have little in common with those of the other architects of his generation. Gehry stood outside what Terry Riley, the curator of the Museum of Modern Art's architecture department, refers to as the "style wars" of the last thirty years—the endless debates over late-international style, post-Corbusian abstraction, deconstruction, historical postmodernism, and other trends. He wrote no papers and advanced no theories. The only consistent direction in his work was an increasingly sculptural approach to architecture.

Gehry's California Aerospace Museum, near one of the sites of the 1984 Summer Olympics, in southeastern Los Angeles, introduced the "village of forms" concept, which he would develop further in many subsequent projects. Instead of aiming for an architectural unity to which all the elements contributed, Gehry's notion was to break the structure down into discrete, dissimilar forms that did not necessarily come together at all; this struck him as a truer expression of contemporary life. He explored the new idea with great success in a guesthouse that he did for the Winton family, in Wayzata, Minnesota, in 1987. The Wintons' main house had been designed in the early fifties by Philip Johnson. Rather than try to complement Johnson's Miesian geometry, Gehry designed six quirky, highly sculptural forms in varying shapes and materials—one for each room or area of the house—and grouped them together with slight spaces in between, so that each retained its integrity. The Wintons, who collect contemporary art and had wanted "a certain degree of fantasy" in their guesthouse, were delighted, and the design won the architecture award that year from *House & Garden*.

Fantasy, playfulness, the confidence to let his mind run free—those were Gehry's starting points. In the early eighties, the Formica Corporation asked ten architects, Gehry among them, to see what they could do with a new plastic laminate called ColorCore, whose color went all the way through rather than simply sitting on the surface. Gehry used it to make some square light boxes, which looked, he thought, too much like Noguchi lamps. Then, "sort of accidentally," he knocked one of them on the floor, and it broke into little pieces that reminded him of fish scales, and this gave him the idea of making a fish lamp. Gehry had been fooling around with the fish image for some time. It was an expression of his anger at postmodernism, he told me, explaining, "When everybody started doing Greek temples again, I got mad and said, 'If you really want to go back into the past, why not do fish, which were there three hundred million years ago?' " He told other people that the image came from a childhood memory of live carp in the bathtub at his grandmother's house in Toronto; his grandmother would buy a carp on Thursday to make gefilte fish on Friday. Take your choice. At any rate, he and one of his associates made a few highly realistic-looking fish with light bulbs inside them. Agnes Gund, the future president of the Museum of Modern Art, saw one of them and immediately wanted it, and so did a number of her friends. Philip Johnson scolded Gehry for wasting his time on such trifling distractions, but he bought one, too. Gehry made more fish lamps, and several snake lamps, out of Formica chips, and he also did some in glass. He has designed a monumental sculpture in the form of a fish, in Barcelona, and a building in Kobe that combines the fish and the snake forms. I never did ask him what the snake represents.

THE buildings that Gehry did in the eighties and the early nineties demolished any lingering doubts about his being a major architect. He collected a closetful of awards, including, in 1989, the Pritzker Architecture Prize, which is considered the premier honor in his field. His public commissions—the socially useful buildings he prefers to work on—grew accordingly, in scale and importance and expense, and this allowed him to experiment with more costly materials (no more chain-link) and more radical ideas. In the last few years, Gehry's innovative use of metal cladding—lead-coated copper, stainless steel, titanium—to cover both the roofs and the sides of his buildings has allowed him to design forms that are increasingly sculptural and fantastic; and a computer design program called Catia, developed originally by the French aviation industry, has made it possible for his staff to analyze and measure these forms and to calculate with great precision the costs of building them. He has also asked well-known artists to collaborate with him on several projects, bringing them into his design process in ways that no other architect has ever tried. Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, Frank Stella, Richard Serra, Larry Bell, and the late Maggie Keswick Jencks worked on the Peter Lewis house, and Oldenburg and van Bruggen collaborated on the Chiat/Day/Mojo headquarters in Venice, California, whose twin-tower façade is a very Oldenburgian pair of giant binoculars. "I always have the feeling when I go to Frank's office that I'm in a sculpture studio, because of the way he works with three-dimensional models," Oldenburg said recently. "That sense of composing a building the way one might compose an art work is unique to Frank."

Not everyone wants architecture-as-art, of course, and even Gehry's admirers don't approve of all his buildings. His American Center in Paris, completed in 1993, is empty today, because its trustees neglected to raise an endowment for operating expenses or a program. Gehry's building came in for slightly less than the twenty-seven million it was budgeted at, but some people blame the building anyway, for being inimical to its setting, a former wine-warehouse district in Bercy.

FOR an architect who is highly sensitive to criticism, as Gehry is, the disaster that overtook the Walt Disney Concert Hall has been deeply depressing. This was to have been Gehry's first major public building in the city that had nurtured his genius while refusing, until then, to grant it any large-scale recognition. Lillian Disney, Walt's widow, launched the project in 1987 with a gift of fifty million dollars to build a new concert hall for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. (The orchestra, one of the country's finest, has performed for years in the acoustically mediocre Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, which it shares with the opera, the ballet, and the Academy Awards.) An architectural search committee was formed by the board of the Music Center, the main bastion of old-line Los Angeles money and power, whose leaders preside over the Chandler Pavilion and much else in the city's cultural life. After visiting concert halls in the United States, Europe, and Japan, the committee eventually narrowed the competition to four candidates: James Stirling, Gottfried Böhm, Hans Hollein, and Gehry.

Before Gehry even started work on his submission, one of the Disney family's lawyers told him that there was no way the family would ever put Walt's name on any building he designed. "So what else is new?" Gehry remembers thinking. He went ahead anyway, and his proposal, according to the search committee's chairman, Richard Koshalek, who is the director of L.A.'s Museum of Contemporary Art, was by far the strongest. Lillian Disney herself fell in love with Gehry's breathtaking vision of curved, sail-like limestone forms, and with his wood-panelled auditorium, where the orchestra would be surrounded on all sides by the audience. Ernest Fleischmann, the Los Angeles Philharmonic's longtime managing director, who is a prickly perfectionist and whose opinions carry great weight, was also enchanted by the design. "It has a marvellous reaching-out quality," he said recently, "an opening-up, blossoming-out, almost hypnotic feeling. And the interior is beautifully intimate—it embraces the audience and the performers. I get cold shivers thinking about it."

When Gehry won the Disney Hall competition, his firm had about thirty people on the staff—not enough, in the Music Center trustees' opinion, to handle a job of this size and complexity. Reluctantly, and under great pressure, Gehry agreed to let the working drawings be done by a large commercial firm; he himself picked Dworsky Associates, whose president, Dan Dworsky, was an old friend of his. The project was put on a fast-track basis—meaning that construction would begin before the final details were worked out—because Lillian Disney, who was in her nineties, wanted to see ground broken in 1992. Early that year, when Gehry saw the first set of working drawings, he knew that the project was in trouble. "The drawings were useless," he told me. "They were supposed to have been done in fourteen months, and twenty-six months later they still weren't finished, and the ones they showed us were no good, unusable. I warned people. I wrote letters. But throughout the process I was being treated like the little woman. I'd go to these meetings and complain, and it would be 'Just take it easy, we know what we're doing, it's politics, it's really complicated.' And 'You're such a great talent, and we want to do this great hall, so cool it, everything's fine.' My mistake. I could have saved the project if I'd quit when I knew it was going wrong. They wouldn't have allowed me to quit, and then they would have had to deal with the problems."

Mounting cost overruns and administrative inertia brought the project to a complete stop in 1994. Its managers had spent some eighty million dollars by then, and all they had to show for it was a huge hole with an underground parking garage, paid for by the county administration. Dworsky blamed Gehry's too complicated design for his firm's failure to produce the working drawings. Gehry has bitter feelings about his former friend. "He promised to play partner, and then he didn't," Gehry told me. "He just took the money and ran." For some time afterward, though, the press and the public seemed to buy Dworsky's explanation that the design was unworkable. Gehry took it very hard. He dreaded going out to dinner, and he talked more often about leaving L.A. Nobody there was offering him any new commissions; it was rumored that he lost the competition for the new cathedral downtown because of Cardinal Mahony's concern over Disney Hall. On the other hand, he *was* being commissioned to do important buildings in Dallas, Cleveland, New York, and Seattle, not to mention Berlin, Düsseldorf, and Seoul.

Eli Broad went to see the still unfinished Guggenheim in Bilbao last September, and came back saying it was a masterpiece. Not long afterward, Koshalek installed an exhibition of Gehry's models and drawings for Disney Hall at MOCA, and Nicolai Ouroussoff, the new architecture critic for the L.A. *Times*, wrote two strong articles decrying the city's failure to support such a great building. Broad and his close friend Richard Riordan, the mayor of Los Angeles, got together and agreed that Disney Hall must be built; largely through their efforts, half of the estimated hundred and seventy million dollars needed to complete the project has been raised, and the rest of the money is said to be virtually assured. The irony of Broad's leading a cavalry charge to rescue Gehry's building was much appreciated in L.A. It is widely believed that Broad wants to become the new cultural czar of the city—to move into the role vacated by Dorothy Chandler and the late Dr. Franklin Murphy—and that he sees Disney Hall as an important step in that direction. "Frank is not really at fault here," Broad told me in March. "It's the people who were in charge. This has been a black hole that was totally mismanaged. But we can now point to Bilbao, and show that it can be built."

That was before things started to go wrong again. When it turned out that Gehry's firm was not being asked to do a new set of working drawings, and that Broad was negotiating on his own with contractors to solicit bids on the basis of the Dworsky drawings (with the implication that they could be fixed), Gehry did what he had said he should have done years earlier—he quit the project. In his letter to Broad, copies of which went to fourteen people, including Diane Disney Miller, Lillian Disney's daughter, Gehry warned that Broad's approach would not only compromise the building's design but would prove to be unworkable. Since then, there have been further discussions. (Gehry's withdrawal was strategic, not final.) Broad, whose authority rests on his raising most of the additional money to build Disney Hall, clearly does not trust Gehry to complete the building within acceptable limits of time and budget. "We did not feel that we could turn over the design project to the Gehry office, because of past history," Broad told me last month. "We all want Frank to stay involved, and we all want to find a resolution that Frank is happy with." According to Gehry, Eli Broad doesn't understand architecture, and won't listen to anybody who disagrees with him. If Broad gets his way, Gehry told me, he really will take his name off the project. "It'll be just like Eli's house," he said. "I won't go near the place." ♦

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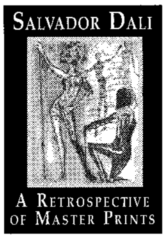

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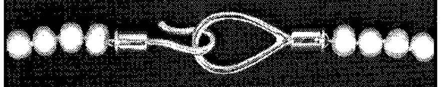

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE TAKEDOWN OF TUPAC

Tupac Shakur was one of gangsta rap's biggest stars. But he got caught in a collision of cultures when inner-city gangs met up with the multibillion-dollar record industry.

BY CONNIE BRUCK

When twenty-five-year-old Tupac Shakur was shot and killed in Las Vegas last fall, he was riding in the passenger seat of a B.M.W. 750 sedan driven by Marion (Suge) Knight, the head of Death Row Records. Death Row, the leading purveyor of West Coast "gangsta rap," is a music-business phenomenon. The company earned seventy-five million dollars in revenues last year. The first album Tupac made for Death Row, "All Eyez on Me," which was released in early 1996, sold over five million units. Tupac had made three earlier albums, but they had never reached the stratosphere of "quintuple platinum." Still, the days preceding his murder were anything but halcyon for him. It had become increasingly clear that there was a steep penalty to pay for having thrown in with Suge Knight.

Even for the rough-edged music industry, which has historically been prone to excess and to connections with criminal elements, Death Row was a remarkable place. It was nothing for Knight to hand over a stack of hundred-dollar bills to Tupac for a weekend's expenses. Knight's office in Los Angeles was decorated in red, the color of the Bloods, one of the city's principal gangs. A guard holding a metal detector stood at the front door of the Death Row studio. "I have not been to one other studio to this day where you have to be searched before you get in," a veteran of the L.A. music business who worked with Tupac told me. "They have a checklist of people who *can* go in with guns. So you have to figure, These guys have guns, and it's a long run to the front door, and there's security at the front door that may try to stop you, even if you get there. . . . Some of the security guys . . . were gangsters just out of the penitentiary. They would look at you, staring right through you. No words would have to be said."

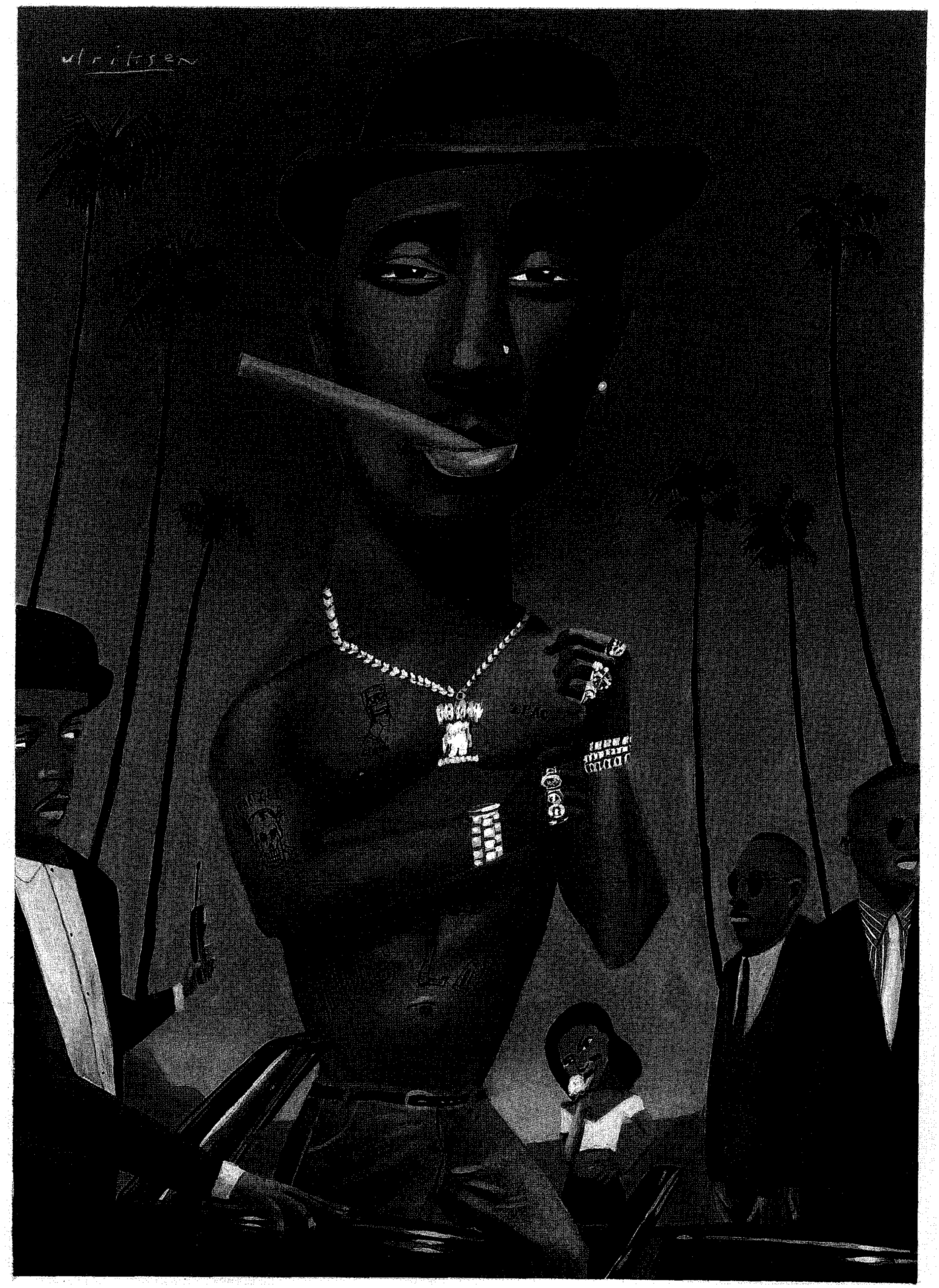
Intimidation was Suge Knight's stock-in-trade. It is said that he forced a black music executive at a rival company to strip in the men's room and then made him walk naked through his company's offices. A mammoth, three-hundred-and-fifteen-pound man, Knight has a substantial criminal record, replete with violent acts. Even when he was on his best behavior—say, dealing with a white executive at one of the major entertainment companies—menace hung heavy in the air. One man told me about a negotiation he had in the apparent safety of his own office. Knight was attended by a bodyguard, and when they reached a difficult point in the deal, the bodyguard ostentatiously leaned forward and let his gun, which was worn in a holster under his jacket, slip into full view.

For a time, the aura of violence served Knight well. It granted him enormous license in small things (like keeping other executives waiting for hours, without a murmur of objection) and in larger ones. Music and video producers who claimed that Death Row owed them money were too frightened to demand it, or to sue. The potential for violence was also a powerful disincentive to anyone who might have considered talking to law-enforcement authorities about questionable practices. Moreover, it did not keep him from doing business with two of the entertainment industry's corporate giants. Death Row has been funded since its inception by its distributor, Interscope, which for years was partially owned by Time Warner, and which Universal has had a fifty-per-cent interest in since early last year.

After Tupac's murder, however, things began to unravel for Knight. In the summer of 1992, he had pulled a gun on two rappers, George and Stanley Lynwood, for using a phone at the studio. After beating one of them with the gun, he ordered them both down on their knees, threatened to kill them, and forced them to take off their pants. He was convicted on assault charges and put on probation. But four years later, just before Tupac was killed, Knight took part in the beating of a man in Las Vegas, and this put him in violation of his probation. In February of this year he began serving a nine-year sentence and is now in San Luis Obispo state prison. In addition, hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of suits have now been filed against Death Row (the largest being that of Tupac's estate, charging that he was defrauded of over fifty million dollars, and seeking damages of a hundred and fifty million). And there may be more to come. A team of agencies, including the F.B.I., the D.E.A., and the I.R.S., are investigating allegations of money laundering, links to street gangs, drug trafficking, and organized crime at Death Row.

"I think, Tupac, you brought down one of the most evil empires of my time," one of his friends, who grew up in the music business, says. He did not intend to romanticize Tupac; this friend, like many others, acknowledges that Tupac was famously split between what he himself referred to as his "good" and his "evil" sides, and that it was his darker side that seemed to have gained dominion during much of his tenure at Death Row. Nonetheless, these friends insist, that was not the *real* Tupac. The real Tupac was gifted, sympathetic, intent on articulating the pain of young blacks in the in-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK ULRIKSEN



One of Tupac's songs was about "a character, somewhat like myself. . . . He's, in his mind, a dynamo. He's Rudolph Valentino and Frank Sinatra."

ner cities. And the real Tupac was trying to leave Death Row when he was killed.

UNFAIRLY or not, Tupac Shakur's name has become synonymous with violent rap lyrics and "thug life" (a phrase Tupac had tattooed across his midriff). While he was alive, he was censured by politicians and, like other rappers, was kept from performing in some concert arenas because promoters could not insure the events against the threat of mayhem from fans. At the same time, however, he was suspected by many in his core ghetto audience of not being cold-blooded enough to measure up to his status as the archetypal gangsta rapper.

These conflicting views of Tupac reflect, to a degree, racial and social chasms. Rap fans insist that performers be authentic representatives of ghetto life: that they live the life they rap about; that life conform to art, so to speak. Rap's critics, on the other hand, are terrified that life *will* conform to art, that the behavior—the drug dealing and the violence—described by rappers will seep into the mainstream culture. The majority of ardent fans and consumers of rap are, in fact, middle-class white youths. (Seventy per cent of those who buy rap records are white.) It is the fear of a violent, marginalized culture's influence on susceptible young people that fuels much of the political debate, and this fear is exacerbated by the widespread adoption of hip-hop style.

Controversy, of course, has never hurt sales. To the contrary. Tupac understood this very well, as did the record-company executives who stood to profit from his talents, and his notoriety. The more trouble Tupac got into with the law, the more credibility he gained on the street—and the more viable a rap star he became. The huge commercial success of gangsta rap created a peculiarly volatile nexus between the worlds of inner-city gangs and the multibillion-dollar record industry. Tupac sometimes said that he thought of his songs as parables, and now it is his own life—his journey into those two worlds, and his immolation at the point at which they converged—that seems almost allegorical.

THE world of Suge Knight and South Central Los Angeles is at a far remove from the one in which Tupac Shakur grew up, though each, in its own way, romanticized violence. Afeni Shakur, Tupac's mother, was a member of the Black Panther Party. Early in 1971, while she was pregnant with Tupac, she was on trial for conspiring to blow up several New York department stores. She and her codefendants—the Panther 21—were acquitted just a month before Tupac was born. He was named for "the last Inca chief to be tortured, brutalized, and murdered by Spanish conquistadores . . . a *warrior*," Afeni says. His surname, Shakur, is a kind of clan name taken by a loose group of black nationalists in New York.

The phrase "Black Power" had been "like a lullaby when I was a kid," Tupac recalled in a deposition he gave in 1995 (in a civil suit in which it was charged that some of Tupac's lyrics had influenced a young man who murdered a Texas state trooper). He remembered that when he was a teen-ager, living in Baltimore, "we didn't have any lights. I used to sit outside by the street lights and read the autobiography of Malcolm X. And it made it so real to me, that I didn't have any lights at home and I was sitting outside on the benches reading this book. And it changed me, it moved me. And then of course my mother had books by people like . . . Patrice Lumumba and Stokely Carmichael, 'Seize the Time' by Bobby Seale and 'Soledad Brother' by George Jackson. And she would tell these stories of things that she did or she saw or she was involved with and it made me feel a part of something. She always raised me to think that I was the Black Prince of the revolution."

Tupac had indeed become a Black Prince by the time he was killed, but not along the lines laid out by the political activists of the sixties. Afeni and her friends were involved in what they perceived as revolutionary activity for the good of their community. Tupac and his fellow gangsta rappers sported diamond-encrusted gold jewelry, drove Rolls-Royce Corniches, and vied with one another in displays of gargantuan excess. Nevertheless, Tupac did not forget who his forebears were. "In my family every black male with the last name of Shakur that ever passed the age of fifteen has either been killed or put in jail," Tupac said in his deposition. "There are no Shakurs, black male Shakurs, out right now, free, breathing, without bullet holes in them or cuffs on his hands. None."

The leaders of the black nationalist movement to which the other Shakurs belonged had been virtually eliminated, largely through the efforts of the F.B.I. In 1988, Tupac's stepfather, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, who had received a degree in acupuncture in Canada and used his skills to develop drug-abuse-treatment programs, was sentenced to sixty years in prison for conspiring to commit armed robbery and murder. The crimes he was accused of included the attempted robbery of a Brink's armored car in 1981, in which two police officers and a guard were killed (and for which the Weather Underground leader Kathy Boudin was also convicted). Mutulu was also found guilty of conspiring to break Tupac's "aunt," Assata Shakur (Joanne Chesimard), out of prison. She had been convicted in 1977 of murdering a New Jersey state trooper, but escaped two years later and fled to Cuba. Tupac's godfather, Elmer (Geronimo) Pratt, is a former Black Panther Party leader who was convicted of killing a schoolteacher during a robbery in Santa Monica in 1968. He was imprisoned for twenty-seven years. His conviction was reversed a few weeks ago on the ground that the government suppressed evidence favorable to him at his trial (most significantly that the principal witness against him was a paid police informant).

It was a haunting lineage, and Tupac would frequently invoke the names of Mutulu, Geronimo, and other "political prisoners" in his lyrics. "It was like their words with my voice," he said. "I just continued where they left off. I tried to add spark to it, I tried to be the new breed, the new generation. I tried to make them proud of me." But, at the same time, he did not want to *be* them. Their revolution, and in most cases their lives, too, were ashes.

IN the Panther 21 trial, Tupac's mother defended herself with a withering cross-examination of a key prosecution witness, who turned out to be an undercover government agent; after her acquittal, this unschooled but intellectually powerful woman was lionized in liberal circles, invited to speak at Harvard and Yale, and subsidized in an apartment on New York's Riverside Drive. Tupac and his sister Sekyiwa, who was born in

"Do you have any references besides Batman?"

1975, became small Panther celebrities on the radical-chic circuit. "Then everything changed, the political tide changed over," Tupac said in his deposition. "We went on welfare, we lived in the ghettos of the Bronx, Harlem, Manhattan." He estimated that he'd lived in "like eighteen different places" when he started junior high school.

In his deposition, Tupac says that by the time he was twelve or thirteen years old Afeni had developed serious drug and alcohol problems. (Afeni disagrees. She says he was seventeen.) Tupac did not know who his father was, but he was close to Mutulu, who was the father of Sekyiwa and lived with them for a number of years. Then Mutulu, too, left him, going underground when Tupac was ten, after the Brink's holdup. While their contact was not altogether broken ("When I would feel he needed me, I'd do whatever I had to to get there, even if it was just so that he could see me—and he'd wave, so happy," Mutulu recalled), the connections came at some cost to Tupac. "He had to keep secrets," Mutulu said. F.B.I. agents would approach Tupac at school to ask if he had seen his stepfather. (Mutulu was on the F.B.I.'s "Ten Most Wanted" list until he was captured, in 1986.)

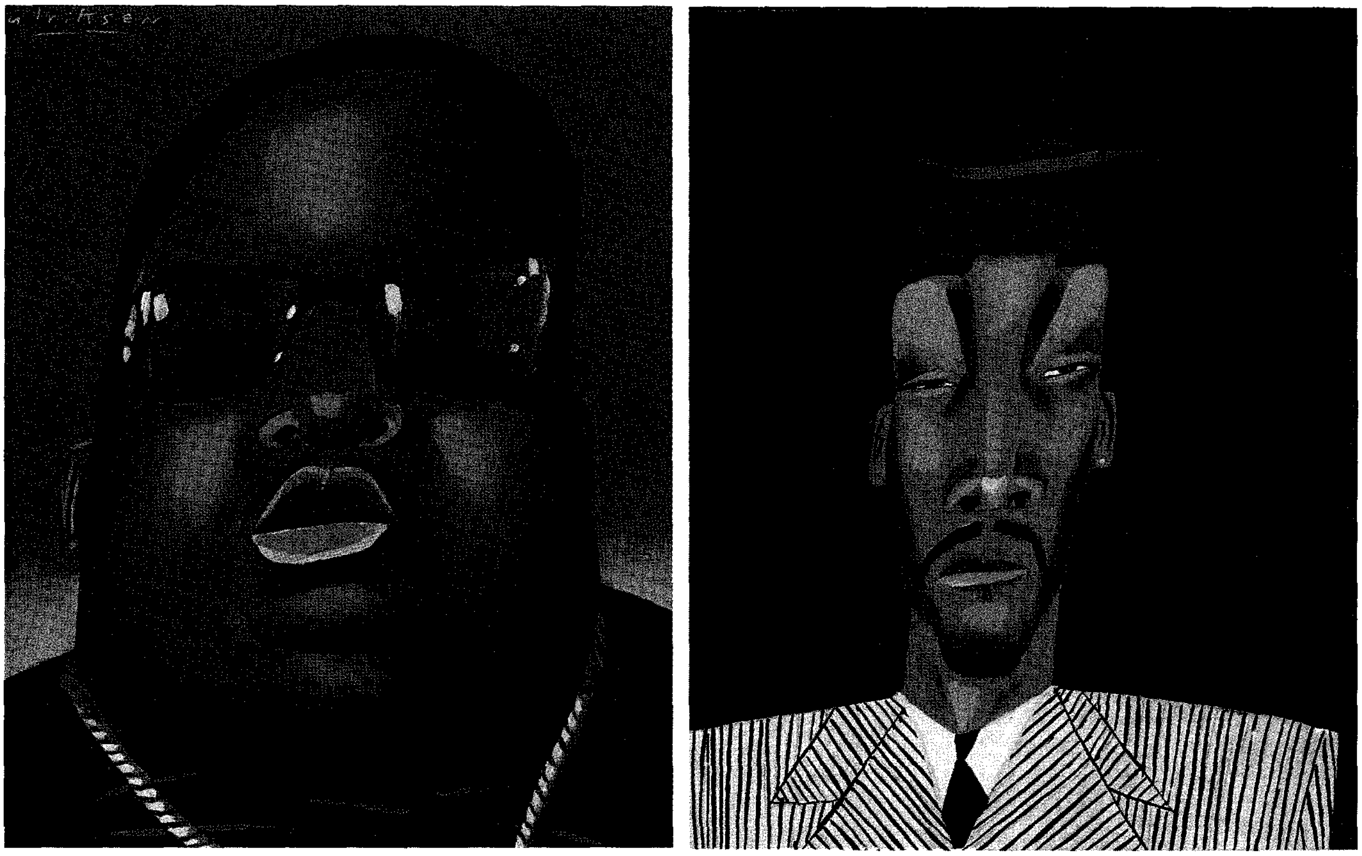
The family moved to Baltimore, and when Tupac was fourteen he was admitted to a performing-arts school there. "For a kid from the ghetto, the Baltimore School for the Arts is heaven," Tupac said in his deposition. "I learned ballet, poetry, jazz, music, everything, Shakespeare, acting, everything as well as academics." Asked by his attorney whether he'd been in any gangs at that time, Tupac responded, "Shakespeare gangs. I was the mouse king in the Nutcracker. . . . There was no gangs. I was an artist." He had started writing poetry when he was in grammar school in New York, and it was only a short step from writing poetry to rapping. He wrote his lyrics with great speed and ease, and was soon performing at benefits for Geronimo Pratt and other prisoners.

Tupac spent two years at the Baltimore School for the Arts. When he first came in, Donald Hicken, a former teacher, recalls, "he was a truly gifted actor, with a wonderful mimetic instinct and an ability to transform a character. . . . His work was always original, never imitative, never off the rack. Even in this talented group of kids, he stood out." One of his schoolmates, Avra Warsofsky, told me that there was no suggestion of the belligerent, confrontational side of Tupac that would later come to dominate his public image. "He was a dear, sweet person," Warsofsky said. "There *were* inner-city kids at the school who were tough, who stole—but he was not that, not one bit."

This idyll ended when Tupac's life at home became intolerable. As he described it in his deposition, he had no money for food or clothes; for a time he stayed at the home of a wealthy classmate and wore *his* clothes. That didn't last, though. "So I had to go back home. . . . But my mother was pregnant, on dope, dope crack. She had a boyfriend that was violent toward her. We weren't staying in our own spot, we were staying in someone else's spot. We never could pay the rent. She always had to sweet-talk this old white man that was the landlord into letting us [stay] for another month. And he was making passes at my mom. So I didn't want to be there anymore. So I sacrificed my future at the School for the Arts to get on a bus to go cross-country to California with no money." He was not quite seventeen.

Tupac stayed for a time with Linda Pratt, the wife of the incarcerated Geronimo Pratt, in Marin City, a poor community north of San Francisco, and then with his mother, who also moved to California. But school in California did not provide a haven for him. "I didn't fit in. I was the outsider. . . . I dressed like a hippie, they teased me all the time. I couldn't play basketball, I didn't know who basketball players were. . . . I was the target for . . . the street gangs. They used to jump me, things like that. . . . I thought I was weird because I was writing the poetry and I hated myself, I used to keep it a secret. . . . I was really a nerd."

TUPAC'S mother was at once a mythic figure to him and fallen, and his identification with his radical heritage was profoundly ambivalent. "At times he resented being the nineties' voice of the



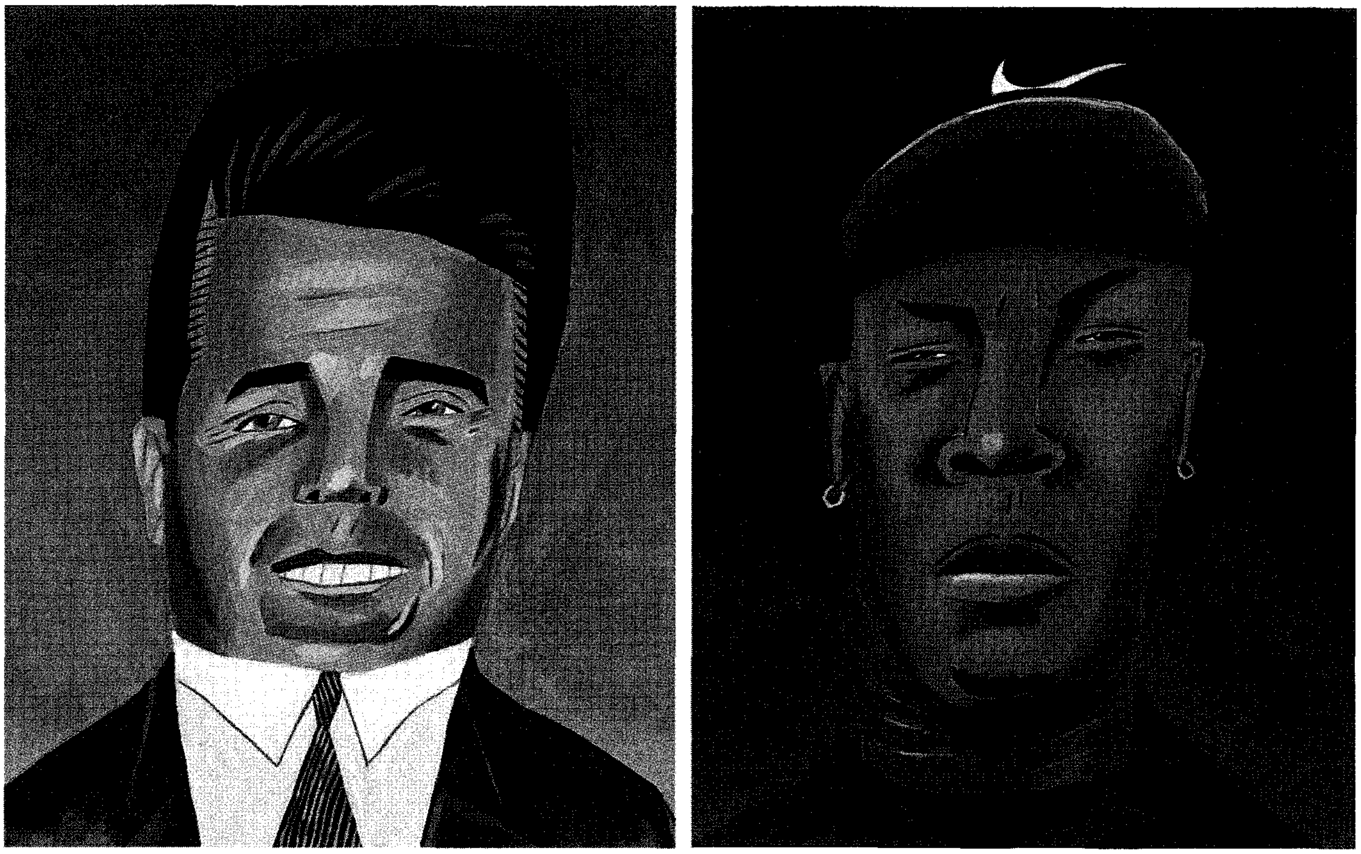
A violent rivalry emerged between East Coast rappers like Biggie Smalls (left) and L.A.-based stars like Snoop Doggy Dogg.

Black Panther Party," Karen Lee, one of his publicists, told me, "and at times he wanted to be." Lee said that he was furious that his mother's former comrades made no move to try to rescue her and her children when she became addicted to drugs. Indeed, when he was living in Marin City—destitute, with no place to stay (his mother and he had fought bitterly, and he accused her of lying to him about her drug use)—it was mainly street people who tried to help him. Man Man (Charles Fuller), a friend who would later become his road manager, provided him with a bed, and kept him from becoming a full-fledged drug dealer.

His fortunes began to brighten slightly in 1990 when he got a job with the rap group Digital Underground, as a road manager and dancer. But his real break came the following year, when he was picked up by Interscope—a small company that had just been founded by the record producer Jimmy Iovine and the entertainment magnate Ted Field (an heir to the Marshall Field fortune) as a joint venture with Time Warner. Tom Whalley, who signed Tupac at Interscope, had brought in a demo tape Tupac had made, and Ted Field gave it to his teen-age daughter. She told her father how much she liked it. Whalley recalls being struck as much by Tupac's looks and by his "presence" as by his talent. He remembers saying to his assistant, "Have you ever seen eyes like that?"

Interscope had positioned itself as something of a maverick in the music business, producing mostly "alternative" rock and gangsta rap, which drew on the culture of the gangs of South Central Los Angeles for its material. Rap was originally an East Coast phenomenon, an element of the hip-hop culture of the nineteen-seventies, which also included graffiti and break dancing. Although hip-hop music broke into the mainstream in 1979 with the international hit "Rapper's Delight," it was not until the late eighties, with the emergence of gangsta rap, that it showed signs of becoming hugely commercial—especially when it gained a wide audience of white youths, much as blues, jazz, and early rock and roll had. In 1991, Interscope released Tupac's first album, "2pacalypse Now," which was replete with militant lyrics depicting violence between young black men and the police. This was the album that Vice-President Dan Quayle said had "no place in our society."

IN the deposition Tupac gave in 1995, when he was asked to interpret several of the songs on "2pacalypse Now," he explained that it was his practice to introduce a central character through whom he could develop a narrative, because he believed that "before you can understand what I mean, you have to know how I lived or how the people I'm talking to live. . . . You don't have to agree with me, but just to understand what I'm talking about. Compassion, to show compassion." He also said that he was not advocating violence against the police but was simply telling stories that described reality for young black men—and cautionary stories at that, in which violence against the police often leads to death or imprisonment. On one track he says, "They claim that I'm violent just cuz I refuse to be silent." The song on the album that proved to be the most popular was entitled "Brenda's Got a Baby." Tupac said that he had written the song after reading a newspaper story about a twelve-year-old girl who became impregnated by her cousin and threw her newborn baby down an in-



David Kenner (left) wound up at the top of one of the hottest black labels, Death Row, which was cofounded by Dr. Dre.

cinerator. Asked by his lawyer whether he considered the song a political statement, Tupac said, "Yes. . . . When this song came out, no male rappers at all anywhere were talking about problems that females were having, number one. Number two, it talked about sexual abuse, it talked about child molestation, it talked about families taking advantage of families, it talked about the effects of poverty, it talked about how one person's problems can affect a whole community of people. It talked about how the innocent are the ones that get hurt. It talked about drugs, the abuse of drugs, broken families . . . how she couldn't leave the baby, you know, the bond that a mother has with her baby and how . . . women need to be able to make a choice."

Rap music is notorious for having lyrics that are degrading to women, and—much as Tupac would appear to be an advocate for women in "Brenda's Got a Baby," and also, even more, in a later song, "Keep Ya Head Up"—he wrote lyrics that were misogynistic as well. In "Tha' Lunatic," another song on "2pacalypse Now," he boasted, "This is the life, new bitch every night." In the deposition, when asked how he could reconcile the conflicting sentiments, he says, "I wrote this when I was seventeen. . . . It's about a character, somewhat like myself, who just got into the rap business, went from having no girls to now there's girls all the time and he's just getting so much sexual attention and he's, in his mind, a dynamo. He's Rudolph Valentino and Frank Sinatra, he's everybody. . . . He can get anybody he wanted. . . . I'm an actor and I was a poet. So I felt like . . . I have to tell the multifaceted nature of a human being. . . . A man can be sexist and compassionate to women at the same time. I was. Look at 'Tha' Lunatic' and look at 'Brenda's Got a Baby.' "

TUPAC moved to Los Angeles early in 1992, and the stories he told in his music began to reflect more specifically his fascination with gang life. "Each gang element wanted to claim him," his stepbrother, Maurice Harding, a rapper known as Mopreme, says. "The cover of 'Strictly 4 My N.I.G.G.A.Z.' "—Tupac's second solo album—"was red, so everybody thought at first he was a Blood." But though he hung out with Bloods and, more often, their rival Crips, Tupac did not join either gang. He was at bottom an observer and chronicler, profoundly utilitarian in his approach to experience and, some thought, people as well. And South Central L.A.—which is almost like a foreign country within a city, so singular and baroque are the gang customs, culture, and laws that govern it—was the richest territory he'd ever seen.

"He could be with this poet, this pimp, this thug—he could suck everything from each of them and that would be part of him," said Man Man, the friend who moved with him from Northern California to L.A. and became his road manager. "He started hanging around thugs. He would suck it up out of them and then use that, in his music and his acting. People would be saying, 'Fred just got killed' . . . next thing you know, it's in his song. . . . He was saying, 'If you don't know what's going on in the ghetto, *this* is what's going on.' "

Tupac was particularly vulnerable, however, to the charge that he had not paid his dues, that he was not a "real" gangster. For all the swaggering machismo that would come to dominate his public image as a gangsta rapper, he was

“So this is infidelity.”

• •

considered within that world to be a novitiate. When he moved to L.A., Tupac said in his deposition, he “didn’t have a slingshot, I didn’t have a knife, I didn’t even have sharp nails.” But soon he had bought a gun and was practicing shooting it on firing ranges. He muscled his slight, lithe dancer’s body with weight training and began to cover his torso with tattoos. Even so, his countenance, when caught in repose—delicate, fey, androgynous, a face with long-lashed, limpid eyes—tended to betray him. But he was adamantly tough. “It irked him when they said, ‘Fake gangsta rapper,’ ” Mopreme told me. “He was saying, ‘I’m from the dirt! Y’all should be applauding me! I made it through the ghetto. I made it through school with no lights. I’m real. We the same person!’ ”

By 1993, Tupac seemed to have become obsessed with gang life. He was spinning from one altercation and arrest to the next. He got involved in a fight with a limo driver in Hollywood, tried to hit a local rapper with a baseball bat during a concert in Michigan, and collected criminal charges and civil suits. According to Man Man and others, many of these incidents were a consequence of someone challenging Tupac’s right to rap hard lyrics. “People would test him,” Man Man explains. “And Pac felt, I have to prove that I’m hard. I would say to him, ‘Most gangsters are people who wish they didn’t have to be hard.’ ”

At Tupac’s instigation, he, Man Man, and another friend had all got a “50 NIGGAZ” tattoo (symbolizing a black confederation among the fifty states). “Nigga,” in Tupac’s lexicon, stood for “Never Ignorant Getting Goals Accomplished.” In “Words of Wisdom,” he raps, “Niggas, what are we going to do? Walk blind into a lie or fight. Fight and die if we must. Die like niggas.” “I *never* could have had that word tattooed on me before,” Man Man told me. “But Pac said, ‘We’re going to take that word that they used and turn it around on them . . . to make it positive.’ ”

When Tupac got his “thug life” tattoo, his manager, Watani Tyehimba, a former Black Panther who had been close to Tupac since he was a small boy, was apoplectic. “I said, ‘*What* have you done?’ ” Tyehimba recalled. “We talked about it, and it became clear that he did it to make sure he never forgot the dispossessed, never forgot where he came from. He was straddling two worlds. And he saw that we never make it as black people unless we sell out. He was saying he never would.” Tupac collaborated with four other rappers on the album “Thug Life, Vol. 1” (which grew out of an earlier project called “Underground Railroad”). The idea was that the album would enable gang members to escape street life by becoming musicians. There were to be subsequent volumes of “Thug Life,” with a new group of gang-member rappers each time. Some of the songs that Tupac and his fellow-artists wanted to include were rejected by Interscope. Tupac acknowledged that he “wouldn’t play ‘Thug Life’ to kids. Not that it’s anything that would make them go crazy or anything, but I wouldn’t.” Still, he knew that it was the harder lyrics that sold the best, and were perceived by the audience to most closely mirror life in the ghetto.

“Pac became the spokesperson for the ghetto. He rapped our pain,” Syke (Tyruss Himes), a West Coast rapper who appeared on the “Thug Life” album, told me. “In the L.A. ghetto, four or five people get killed every week. You don’t hear about it. Only their families know.” Through Syke and others, Tupac was now experiencing that life directly. In several of his songs, Tupac says, “Remember Kato.” “Big Kato was like my brother,” Syke said. “He got killed for my car. It had Dayton rims—they cost twenty-five hundred dollars. They killed him for it.” Mental Illness, another rapper with whom Tupac became friendly through Syke, was also killed; and Syke’s brother killed himself. (“I guess from the stress,” Syke said.)

“If you’re rapping this hard stuff, you have to live it,” Syke declared. “Otherwise people check your résumé and say, ‘You don’t look like you’re hard from your résumé, let’s see if you are.’ Pac always felt he had to prove something to his homeboys.” He points to the “rags,” or bandannas, Tupac wore. “He started wearing red around Crips, and blue around Bloods—so that when he was around Crips, Bloods wouldn’t think he was a Crip, and blue around Bloods, so

Crips wouldn't think he was a Blood. His behavior was not right; he was on the edge. But they just figured he was Tupac the Rapper."

Mopreme recalled an incident that was emblematic. "There was a fight at the Comedy Store, and some gang members were after him. So he put on his [bulletproof] vest and all his guns, and he went to their place. He said, 'Y'all looking for me? Here I am!' " After that, Mopreme added, the gang, duly impressed, didn't bother him. Legendary as such an exploit became, the reality was rather more complicated. Watani Tyehimba told me that it was the "Rolling Sixties" set of the Crips that Tupac had gotten in trouble with and that he and Mutulu Shakur each contacted their leadership. "I did it from the street, Mutulu did it from prison, and together we got it under control. *Then* he went to the Crips' place. After that they were under orders not to harm him." Regarding Tupac's dramatic gesture, Tyehimba said, "It was machismo."

Of all Tupac's much publicized, violent confrontations in the tempestuous year 1993, none better illustrated the degree to which he had become the exemplar of the gangsta-rap mandate than his arrest for shooting two off-duty police officers in Atlanta. The officers, he would later say, had been harassing a black motorist. The charges were dropped when it emerged that the policemen had been drinking and had initiated the incident, and when the prosecution's own witness testified that the gun one of the officers threatened Tupac with had been seized in a drug bust and then stolen from an evidence locker.

The shooting in Atlanta made Tupac a hero to some, a demon to others. "They were acting as bullies, and they drew their guns first," Mutulu Shakur says of the officers. Tupac's response "sealed him as not only a rapper but a person who was true to the game. That made him, to the people who were his audience, real—and if not liked, respected." However, to the law-enforcement community and the political conservatives who were rap's most vocal critics Tupac was not only propagating insurrectionist rhetoric in his lyrics but acting it out as well. Gangsta rap had been provoking concern among law-enforcement authorities in this country since at least 1989, when an F.B.I. public-affairs officer wrote a letter to Ruthless/Priority Records, which distributed records by the group N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude). The F.B.I. was concerned, specifically, with the song "Fuck tha Police." "Advocating violence and assault is wrong, and we in the law enforcement community take exception to such action," the F.B.I. officer wrote. In 1992, police groups and their allies—most visibly Vice-President Quayle—denounced Time Warner for having put out the song "Cop Killer," by Ice-T. The following year, Time Warner released Ice-T from his contract, citing creative differences.

Officer Gregory White, of the L.A.P.D., who works in a special gang unit, explains that gangsta rap is a legitimate concern of law-enforcement agencies because it often involves criminal activity. "Rap is a way to launder dirty drug money," he says. According to White, some record companies provide fronts for the gangs. But he adds that it is rap music's virulently antipolice rhetoric that is considered particularly pernicious.

Charles Ogletree, Jr., a black attorney who is a professor at Harvard Law School and who represented Tupac on a number of cases in the last year of his life, notes that "people in law enforcement not only disliked Tupac but despised him. This wasn't just a person talking, but someone who had generated a following among those who had problems with the police, and who *spoke* to them. He was saying, 'I understand your pain, I know the source of it, and I can tell you what to do about it.' Police officers knew him by name, Bob Dole mentioned him by name."

Mutulu Shakur believes that his own relationship to Tupac was a source of continuing concern to law-enforcement authorities. Mutulu, who wears long dreadlocks and is revered within the black-nationalist community, had been a target of the F.B.I. and other police agencies for years before the Brink's robbery. During his trial, the federal district court judge confirmed that "the rights of

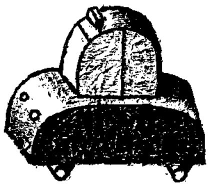
"Please welcome Big Alcohol."

Dr. Shakur . . . were violated by the COINTELPRO program." (COINTELPRO was initiated by the F.B.I. to neutralize black-activist leaders as well as certain right-wing extremists.) Recently, in a development not unlike that in the case of Geronimo Pratt, Mutulu was granted permission to file a motion for a new trial on the ground that evidence was discovered indicating that the government withheld information that would have been favorable to his defense.

In the spring of 1994, about six months after Tupac shot the police officers in Atlanta, Mutulu was moved from the penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, to the super-maximum-security federal prison in Marion, Illinois, and from there to the country's most maximum-security institution, in Florence, Colorado. In a memorandum written in February, 1994, the warden of Lewisburg argued that Mutulu needed "the controls of Marion," in part because of his "outside contacts and influence over the younger black element."

Mutulu is convinced that Tupac became a lightning rod after he shot the policemen in Atlanta. "These disenfranchised—the young blacks who are poor and hopeless—have no leader," Mutulu said. "Their heroes are cultural and sports heroes. No one—not Jesse Jackson, not Ben Chavis, not Louis Farrakhan—has as much influence with this segment as rappers. So when Tupac stands up to a white cop, shoots it out, wins the battle, gets cut free, and continues to say the things he's been saying—the decision to destroy his credibility is clear."

WHETHER by happenstance or not, about two weeks after the Atlanta shooting something occurred that could not have been better designed to remove Tupac from circulation—and that would ultimately lead to his undoing. While in New York for the filming of the movie "Above the Rim," Tupac had been socializing with a Haitian-born music promoter, Jacques Agnant. Tupac was playing the part of a gangster named Birdie in the movie, and he told friends that spending time with Agnant helped him in his portrayal of Birdie—much as hanging out with the gangs in South Central provided him with material for his lyrics. "He said that he was studying Jacques—that Jacques *was* Birdie," Watani Tyehimba recalls. But Tyehimba was alarmed by the relationship, and warned Tupac to keep his distance. "I told Tupac the first time I met him, Charles Fuller told Tupac, everyone told him he should stay away from Jacques."



Tupac ignored the warnings. "Jacques had all this gold and diamond jewelry," Man Man says. "He had money. He had a nice B.M.W. He could get you in any club. Pac was just starting to be known then, and he couldn't get in all the clubs. Jacques spent about four or five thousand dollars on Tupac in the beginning—he just overwhelmed him." According to someone else who knew Agnant, Madonna (with whom Tupac would become close) was one of Agnant's celebrity friends.

On November 14, 1993, Jacques Agnant and Tupac went to Nell's, the downtown New York club. A friend of Agnant's, identified only as "Tim," introduced Tupac to a nineteen-year-old woman named Ayanna Jackson. She expressed her interest in him; they danced together; and she performed oral sex in a corner of the dance floor. They went to his hotel, where they had intercourse. The next day, she called and left many messages on his voice mail, saying, among other things, how much she'd enjoyed his prowess. Four days later, on November 18th, she returned to his hotel suite. There, she found Tupac, Man Man, Agnant, and an unidentified friend of Agnant's. They all watched television in the living room, and then she and Tupac went into the bedroom; later, the three other men entered the room. What ensued is disputed; Jackson claims that she was forced to perform oral sex on Tupac while Agnant partly undressed her and grabbed her from behind, and that they then made her perform oral sex on Agnant's friend while Tupac held her. (Man Man, she acknowledged, did not touch her.) Tupac claimed that he left the room when the other men entered and did not witness whatever happened. In any case, Jackson testified that she left the suite in tears and that Agnant told her to calm down, saying that he "would hate to see what happened to Mike [Tyson] happen to Tupac": that is, a woman charging him with sexual assault, which is what Jackson promptly did. She summoned the hotel's security officers, who called the police. Tupac, Man Man, and Agnant were arrested. (Agnant's friend left.)

Indictments were handed down on sex-abuse, sodomy, and also weapons charges (two guns were found in the hotel room), and Agnant's lawyer, Paul Brenner, who had represented the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association for many years, moved that his client's case be severed from his two codefendants', on the ground that only Tupac and Man Man had been charged with the weapons offenses, and that therefore the indictment was improperly joined. The prosecutor did not oppose the motion—something that Tupac's lawyers say is highly unusual—and the judge granted it.

It was apparently after Agnant's case was severed that Tupac became convinced that Agnant was a government informer and had set him up. Tupac's suspicions were, inevitably, shaped by the experience of his extended family; "Jacques didn't smell right to me," says Watani Tyehimba, who considers himself particularly attuned to the presence of undercover agents because of his long history with the Panthers and what he learned from COINTELPRO files obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.

One night in November, 1994, during the trial of Tupac and Man Man, Tupac was at a club with the actor Mickey Rourke and a friend of Rourke's, A. J. Benza, a reporter for the *Daily News*. Tupac told Benza that he believed that Agnant had set him up. A couple of days later Benza wrote an account of the conversation, recalling that Tupac had told him that Mike Tyson had called him up from prison to warn him that Agnant was "bad news." On the night of November 30th, while the jury was deliberating, Tupac went to a Times Square music studio to rap for an artist, Little Shawn, who, according to Man Man, had ties to Agnant. When Tupac and his entourage entered the lobby of the studio, three black men followed them, drew guns, and ordered them to lie down. Tupac reached for his own gun, which he usually wore in his waistband, cocked. The men then shot Tupac five times, grabbed his gold jewelry, and fled.

Convinced that the shooting had also been a setup, and that the shooters would return to finish the job, Tupac checked himself out of the hospital a few hours after surgery, and moved secretly to the house of the actress Jasmine Guy to recuperate. When he returned to the courtroom, bandaged and in a wheelchair, he was acquitted of the three sodomy counts and the weapons charges but, in an apparent compromise verdict, convicted of two counts of sexual abuse—specifically, forcibly touching Ayanna Jackson's buttocks. Bail was set at three million dollars, and Tupac turned himself in and was incarcerated. On February 7, 1995, he was sentenced to a term of not less than one and a half to not more than four and a half years in prison.

A few months after Tupac was sentenced, Jacques Agnant's indictment was dismissed, and he pleaded guilty to two misdemeanors. When I asked Melissa Mourges, the assistant district attorney who had tried the case against Tupac, why Agnant had been dealt with in such a favorable way, she said that Ayanna Jackson was "reluctant to go through the case again." Jackson had, however, brought a civil suit against Tupac following the trial. (The suit was subsequently settled.)

Agnant's lawyer, Paul Brenner, believes that Tupac should never have been convicted. "It was a *very* weak case," he says. "A lot went on" at Nell's. Brenner suspects that the police planted the gun they found in the hotel room. "I worked for the P.B.A. for ten years, I *know* the police. . . . The police are friends of mine," he says. "But Tupac had no friends in the police. I couldn't find a policeman who had a good word to say about Tupac."

Tupac's conviction that Agnant had set him up seemed only to deepen with time. He went public with it on his last album, "The Don Killuminati":

> I hope my true mutha-fuckas know
> This be the realest shit I ever wrote. . . .
> Listen while I take you back
> and lay this rap
> A real live tale
> About a snitch named Haitian Jack
> Knew he was working for the feds. . . .
> Set me up
> Wet me up
> Nigga stuck me up.

Agnant has filed a suit for libel against Tupac's estate, Death Row, Interscope, the producer and the engineer of the song, and the publishing company. Ayanna Jackson has always maintained that she was not involved in any setup.

What role Agnant, the police, or any other governmental entity may have played in the sexual-assault case against Tupac is conjectural. But this much is plain: once the gears of the criminal-justice system were set in motion, Tupac was penalized more for who he was—a charismatic gangsta rapper with a political background—than for what he had done.

"I imagine serenity's pretty much the same, one season to the next?"

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Melissa Mourges seemed to share the animus many police officers felt for Tupac; Charles Ogletree argued in his appeal that her conduct was so prejudicial (she railed against Tupac as a "thug," among other things) that a new trial was warranted on that ground alone. The setting of bail at three million dollars, Ogletree commented, was "inhumane," and the sentence was "out of line with the conviction." Tupac was sent to the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora, New York, a maximum-security prison. "The entire case," Ogletree said, "reeked of impropriety."

In the very beginning, prison granted Tupac a sort of grace, extricating him from the manic, overcharged existence he had created for himself. Outside, he drank heavily and smoked marijuana constantly. Now his mind was clear. And in Dannemora he was liberated from the demands of his music. His gangsta-rapping had been a pose, he said. He had been required to maintain the pose and he did not regret doing so, but it was a pose nonetheless, and one he was abdicating. He had laid down the tracks of a new album, "Me Against the World," before he was incarcerated and, having finished that, he told *Vibe* magazine, "I can be free. When you do rap albums, you got to train yourself. You got to constantly be in character. You used to see rappers talking all that hard shit, and then you see them in suits and shit at the American Music Awards. I didn't want to be that type of nigga. I wanted to keep it real, and that's what I thought I was doing. But . . . let somebody else represent it. I represented it too much. I *was* thug life."

With the opportunity to reflect, sober, on the events that led to his incarceration, he said he realized that, "even though I'm innocent of the charge they

"Sam is very focussed."

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gave me, I'm not innocent in terms of the way I was acting. . . . I'm just as guilty for not doing nothing as I am for doing things." He accepted blame for not having intervened on behalf of Ayanna Jackson. "I know I feel ashamed—because I wanted to be accepted and because I didn't want no harm done to me, I didn't say nothing."

In April of 1995, while he was still in prison, he married Keisha Morris, whom he'd been dating for about six months before he was put in jail. Eminently responsible and levelheaded, she was going to school and holding down a job; she didn't smoke marijuana; and she didn't immediately have sex with him. Morris told me that on their first date they saw a movie, and then Tupac prevailed on her to stay in his hotel room. When she insisted on going to bed fully dressed, he protested only that "you *could* take off your sneakers." In the deposition he gave in the civil case brought against him by the family of the young man who had murdered the Texas state trooper, Tupac described his new wife: "She's twenty-two, she's a Scorpio, she . . . just graduated from John Jay College with a degree in criminal science, and she's taken a year off, she's going to go to law school . . . she's nice, she's quiet, she's a square, she's a good girl. She's my first and only girlfriend I ever had in my entire life and now she's my wife."

Tupac and Morris talked about moving to Arizona, and what they would name their kids. He started to organize his finances, and attempted to settle the numerous lawsuits pending against him across the country. But in the forbidding, almost feudal backdrop of the Clinton Correctional Facility, his efforts seemed increasingly irrelevant. His lawyers were filing appeals in his case, and under those circumstances he could have been allowed to post bail, but the district attorney's office was fighting his right to do so, and the proceedings dragged on, month after month. What he had spoken of initially when he was at Rikers Island as prison's "gift"—of respite and introspection—now had been overshadowed by the nightmare of incarceration.

"Dannemora was a hellhole—he had a one-to-four-year sentence, and they put him in a maximum-security prison!" one of his lawyers, Stewart Levy, says. Levy recalls that while he was visiting Tupac one day, "Tupac had a rectal search when he came in"—to the visiting area. "Then we spent six hours there in full view of the guards. Then the guards started saying 'Tupac! Tupac!' in this falsetto voice, putting up their fingers with these plastic gloves, waving them—'It's time! It's time!' Why a second rectal search, when he'd been sitting there in plain view with his lawyer, why, except to humiliate him?" Yaasmyn Fula, who had known him since he was a baby, and who visited him often in prison, recalls, "It was a terrible experience for him—to be captive, in a horrific situation, with guards threatening to kill him, inmates threatening to kill him. . . . He said, 'I have never had people demean me and disgrace me as they have in this jail.' "

Other factors weighing on Tupac contributed to his anxiety about being in prison. He was the breadwinner for a large extended family—his mother, his sister, her baby, his aunt and her family, and more. Iris Crews, one of his attorneys in the sex-abuse case—who had been leery of representing Tupac but became beguiled and devoted ("Had he been this foulmouthed, woman-hating kid, I wouldn't have done it")—recalled that one day as he sat in court with a bunch of young children climbing all over him during a recess he had remarked to her, "If I don't work, these kids don't eat." "He'd been deprived of his childhood, and then, at twenty, he had twenty people to support," she said. Beyond that, he had enormous legal fees for cases all over the country. After nearly six months in prison, despite the money being advanced by Interscope, Tupac's funds were depleted.

Death Row Records offered to solve all Tupac's financial problems. Death Row had been started by Suge Knight and the rap producer Dr. Dre in 1992. Knight was a former University of Nevada football star who had grown up in Compton in South Central L.A. In the late eighties, he had worked as a bodyguard in the burgeoning L.A. rap scene, eventually developing a friendship with Dre, who was then a member of the group N.W.A. Knight persuaded Dre that he was getting cheated by his record company and that he should leave. Knight is alleged to have threatened Dre's producer with baseball bats and pipes in order to break his contract.

The release of Dre's album "The Chronic" shortly after Death Row was founded helped establish the company as a major force. By the summer of 1995, it was one of the top record companies in the rap-music world. "Suge and Dre really were a magical combination," a black entertainment executive who was then at one of the big music companies told me. They were trusted on the streets. "White or black executives, no matter what their thinking, were not going to be trusted. We're square to them." And Knight was a formidable manager. "He never really seemed to sleep. He had an instinct with people about what he thought their marketability could be. He could motivate Dre to finish what he started. And he didn't take no for an answer. Dre had essentially all the ideas, and Suge the management muscle to get it done."

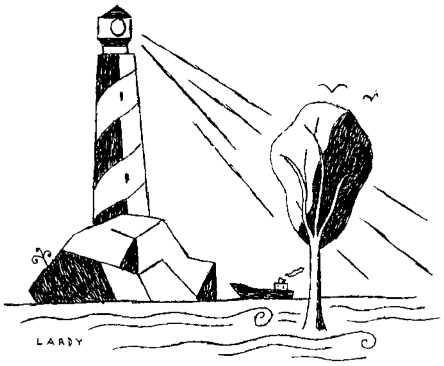
Death Row owed its start to Interscope. Jimmy Iovine and Ted Field had decided to fund Death Row and distribute its products in 1992, when other companies had shied away. One executive at a major studio who had turned down the prospective Death Row venture told me that he and his colleagues felt that "life is too short" to assume the risk that they believed an association with Knight might pose. "Jimmy is comfortable with gangsters, he can deal with them, it doesn't bother him," the executive said. "He's a street guy himself." Iovine—the son of a Brooklyn longshoreman, who, many say, aspired to be the next David Geffen—wanted to make his mark fast, and he was impatient with the progress of his new business at first. So he gambled, and reaped the payoff: gangsta rap turned out to be a gold mine.

But the disadvantage of being involved with Death Row was continuing reproaches from social critics and incensed shareholders. Time Warner had succumbed to pressure of that nature when it disengaged itself from Ice-T in 1993. By early 1995, however, the profitability of gangsta rap seemed to be tipping the scales of greed and fear. When Time Warner was discussing raising its stake in Interscope from twenty-five per cent to fifty per cent, they sought assurances that the relationship with Death Row would continue. Then, in the late spring of 1995, Time Warner again came under attack for its involvement in gangsta rap, this time by the joined forces of William Bennett and C. DeLores Tucker, the chairwoman of the National Political Congress of Black Women. Tucker, pointing to Tupac, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and Dr. Dre (the latter two at Death Row), all of whom had problems with the law, declared that "Interscope is a company Time Warner needs to get out of business with immediately."

Tupac was too promising an artist for Interscope to consider jettisoning; but there was a compromise solution that might make it appear that Interscope was insulated from him, and the solution apparently made sense to everyone involved—except Tupac.

Suge Knight had wanted Tupac at Death Row for some time, although he had not been a Tupac supporter at first. "He was not into the Tupac-artist thing," a producer who knows Suge says. "But then came his thug notoriety—being called a rapist, getting in brawls. . . . With his problems, he became more attractive to Suge." Knight had been making overtures to Tupac with Interscope's blessing. A music executive who worked with Interscope recalls Iovine saying to Knight, "Take this kid, take him *please.* He's out of control. You can control him. *Take* him." Watani Tyehimba remembers a meeting in 1993 attended by Tupac, Knight, Iovine, and himself, at which Iovine, saying it made sense for Tupac to work with Dr. Dre, argued strongly that he should sign with Death Row. Tyehimba was surprised, but Iovine explained that Interscope and Death Row had a "unique relationship"—suggesting that Death Row's gain of Tupac would not mean Interscope's significant loss.

The exact nature of that "unique relationship" may be of more than academic interest to federal authorities investigating possible criminal activities at Death Row. Suge Knight has always been at pains to portray himself as an independent operator. For example, he boasted that Death Row, unlike other small companies, owns its masters (the original recordings of the albums). Since the long-term value of rap recordings is only speculative at this point, the ownership of the masters is a matter of ego more than economics, a music executive explained to me, and in the case of Death Row "it was important for the image to say they were black-owned." But in fact Death Row's masters are heavily mortgaged, and have been used as security against loans and advances from Interscope. Indeed, Death Row has been financially dependent on Interscope from the beginning.



While Knight clearly had a great deal of autonomy, he and Iovine worked together closely. "It was Jimmy and Suge, Jimmy and Suge," someone who knew them both well told me. Since no one wanted to tell Knight anything that "set his fuse," he said, it was Iovine who dealt with Knight. The relationship was very hands-on. Promotions and marketing for Death Row were handled by an Interscope employee. If a production company was making a video for Death Row, its contract might well be with Interscope. The closeness between the two companies was underscored by their physical proximity. Until last year they were located just across the hall from each other in an office building in Westwood.

ON a business flowchart, it may have meant just shifting Tupac from one box to another, but for Tupac to go from Interscope to Death Row, only a hallway apart, was to enter a different, and far more sinister, world. It was widely believed that one of the major investors in Death Row was a drug dealer named Michael (Harry-O) Harris, who was serving time for attempted murder as well as drug convictions. He was said to have provided the seed money for Death Row. Knight and Harris's lawyer, David Kenner, who had also become the lawyer for Death Row, were supposed to be guarding Harris's interests. There were even rumors that the company was being used to launder drug money on a continuing basis. Moreover, it was said that there were contracts out on Knight, and that Harris was unhappy with Knight's business practices. How many of these stories had reached Iovine is not clear. He did, of course, know of Knight's criminal record and propensity for brutality when he first made the deal with Death Row, and as time went on he became aware of the continuing climate of violence that enveloped the company. A lawsuit against Death Row and Interscope was filed on behalf of a man stomped to death at a Death Row party in early 1995.

As for Michael Harris's bankrolling of Death Row, Iovine told federal investigators that he had heard a rumor about it in 1994 or 1995, but it was not until December, 1995, when Harris threatened to sue the company, claiming that he owned half of it, that Iovine took the rumor seriously. If this was true, then Iovine was strangely insulated, for in L.A. music circles Harris's role was widely gossiped about. Indeed, in the summer of 1995, months before Harris wrote to Iovine about his intentions to sue, the head of the Time Warner music division, Michael Fuchs, made an overture to arrange a prison meeting with Harris. He was trying to decide whether the company should yield to the political pressure about gangsta rap and sell its interest in Interscope, and he believed that it might well be Harris, not Knight, who could speak with authority to Time Warner about the future direction of Death Row. The meeting never took place, because Time Warner executives and the board of directors quickly decided that the company should shed its troublesome investment by selling its fifty-per-cent stake back to Interscope. Interscope was able to exploit that rebuff by turning around and selling the fifty-per-cent stake to MCA Music Entertainment Group (now known as Universal), for a profit of roughly a hundred million dollars.

TEMPTING as Knight's offers were (Death Row *was* the premier rap label, putting out one multi-platinum record after another), Tupac had consistently declined to leave Interscope. But in the summer of 1995, when it seemed as though his incarceration might continue indefinitely—for years even, if he was not allowed to post bail—he was more desperate than he'd ever been. It was in this bleak moment that Knight—and, apparently, Iovine as well—saw the opportunity to arrange things the way they wanted to. It had become not only attractive but vital to Death Row that Tupac join the label. One of the company's biggest stars, Snoop Doggy Dogg, was facing a murder trial, and it was rumored on the street that Dr. Dre was leaving. (Dre would indeed leave by early 1996.) Death Row could not afford to lose both artists. And Knight surely knew that Tupac would be more popular than ever after his prison term, more "real" to his audience than he had been before.

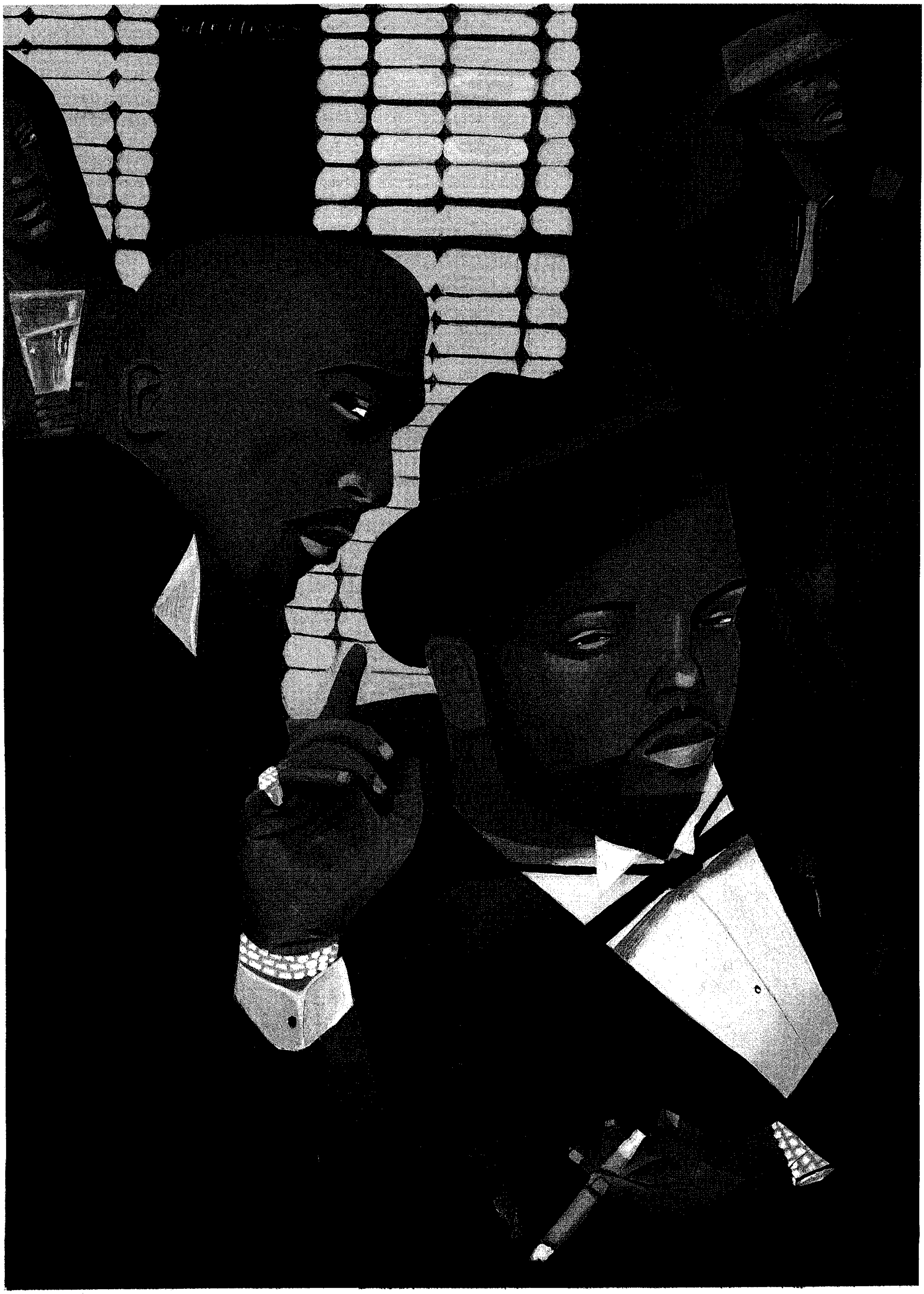
Even though Interscope advanced Tupac six hundred thousand dollars during the nine months he was in prison, he was broke and frustrated. To Tyehimba, there seemed to be an unmistakable synchrony at work. Interscope would not or could not provide enough funds for Tupac. And as Knight became a more and more importunate suitor, Interscope "was squeezing us to get us to go to Death Row," Tyehimba says. Knight—accompanied by Death Row's lawyer, David Kenner, who had come to play a major role in the company, far exceeding specific legal tasks—made repeated trips to Dannemora to visit Tupac. Knight promised to solve Tupac's most intractable problems. According to several people close to Tupac, Knight claimed that Kenner could cure the legal logjam and win permission to post bail. Knight further promised that he would put up some portion of the bail and, more important, make Death Row the corporate guarantor for the entirety. Knight swore he would make Tupac a superstar, much bigger than he'd been with Interscope. And he would solve Tupac's financial worries. He would even buy Afeni a house.

It was a dazzling hand. What was probably Knight's trump card, however, was the thing that he, and he alone, could offer Tupac—the aura of gangster power. Even though Tupac had claimed that he had outgrown the gangster pose, his stay in Dannemora had made him feel more vulnerable than ever before. "He wanted to get out of jail, and he needed a label that could back him," a friend who visited him in prison that summer says. "The street shit had to be dealt with, and Suge had power on the street." Tupac brooded about being shot in the Times Square recording studio and about what he believed was the setup by Jacques Agnant. He also suspected people who were there in the studio that night: Andre Harrell, now the head of Motown; Bad Boy Entertainment C.E.O. Sean (Puffy) Combs; the rapper Christopher Wallace, known both as Biggie Smalls and as the Notorious B.I.G.; and others. (They all denied any involvement.) At first, Man Man said, Tupac did not believe that Biggie, who had been a good friend of his, and who had come to visit him when he was recuperating from his wounds, had been involved in any way. "But when Tupac was in jail he was getting letters from people saying Biggie had something to do with it, he started thinking about it, it got so out of hand, it *grew*—and once it got that big, publicly, you had to go with it."

Watani Tyehimba, Stewart Levy, and Charles Ogletree all say they argued vigorously with Tupac about his decision to go to Death Row. "Tupac told us, 'The trouble with all of you is, you're too *nice*,' " Levy recalls. Tyehimba told me that at his last meeting with Tupac at the prison, Tupac hugged him, wept, and said, "I know I'm selling my soul to the devil." Kenner drafted a handwritten, three-page agreement for Tupac to sign. Within a week, in a stunning coincidence, the New York Court of Appeals granted him leave to post bail. (The money was provided by Interscope and a division of Time Warner, although Tupac always gave Suge full credit.)

Knight and Kenner arrived in a private plane and white stretch limousine to pick Tupac up. Underscoring the degree of porousness between Interscope and Death Row, Tupac was, according to someone familiar with the negotiation, given a "verbal release" from his Interscope contract. As for Kenner's handwritten document, Ogletree, who would not see it until much later, says, "It wasn't a legal contract. . . . It was absurd that anyone with an opportunity to reflect would agree to those terms. It was only because he was in prison that he signed it. Tupac was saying, 'My freedom is everything. If you can get me my freedom, you can have access to my artistic product.' "

IN ways large and small, in both art and life, Tupac Shakur instinctively pushed past customary boundaries, and when he came out of prison and joined Death Row that impulse was heightened. He would work the longest hours (nineteen-hour stretches, despite the consumption of enormous amounts of alcohol and marijuana), he would be-



Tupac with Suge Knight, the head of Death Row. "Suge would get him all stirred up," a friend says. "And he'd try to behave like a gangster."

come the biggest star, he would become a "superpower" within the Death Row-dominated world of gangsta rap. Just nine months earlier, he had said, "Thug life to me is dead." Now he embraced it. "Pac was like a chameleon," Syke says, echoing a common view among Tupac's friends. "Whatever he was around, that's what he turned into. And when he got around Death Row, he tried to be that."

While Tupac had transgressed many social limits, he had also drawn to him people who tried, with varying degrees of success, to moderate his behavior. But when he set out for the province of Death Row, he left behind virtually all of these putative guardians—among them, Watani Tyehimba, Karen Lee, Man Man, even his wife, Keisha. (Their marriage was later annulled.) Yaasmyn Fula, who was one of the few old friends who remained close to Tupac, says that he was "out of his element. It was a completely different soldier mentality. He was fascinated by it because of the absence of a male figure who could say, 'Leave it alone.' "

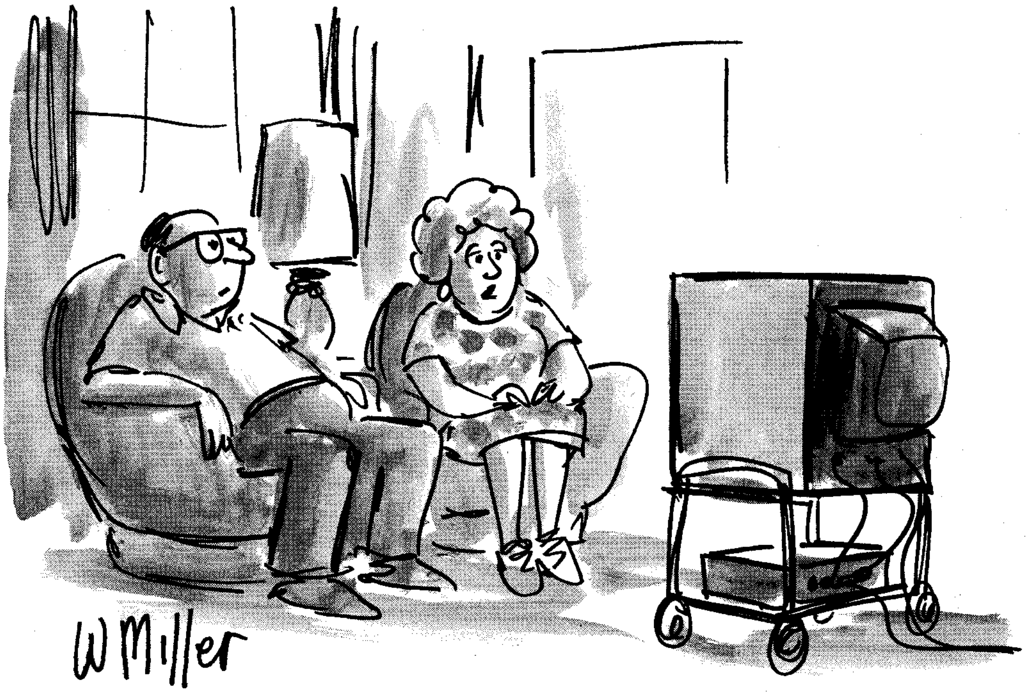
"He was always looking for a father," Watani Tyehimba says, "in me some, in Mutulu some. But what he missed was *one* father with the good and the bad, not a composite." By the time Tupac met the man who said he was his father (a former Black Panther named Billy Garland, who materialized at Tupac's hospital bedside in New York after Tupac was shot in the Times Square lobby), the encounter failed to satisfy him. It was in Suge Knight, many thought, especially when they saw the two together—the slender, lithe youth shadowed by the other's massive bulk, the one all animation, the other exuding authority—that he found that connection. Tupac and Knight seemed almost inseparable in the months after Tupac's release from prison; they worked together long hours in the studio, and socialized when they were through. One of Tupac's friends remembers watching them sing a song from the soundtrack of "Gridlock'd": "You Ain't Never Had a Friend Like Me."

The combination of Tupac and Knight seems to have been combustible, with each activating the most explosive elements in the other. Someone who has known Knight well for years points out that it was after Tupac arrived at Death Row that its signature excess became even more pronounced—fancy clothes, gold and diamond jewelry (especially heavy medallions, laden with diamonds and rubies, bearing the Death Row symbol of a hooded figure in an electric chair), Rolls-Royces (four were purchased to celebrate Snoop Doggy Dogg's acquittal on murder charges), and lots of women. Before Tupac, a knowledgeable insider pointed out, "Death Row had not had a real star. They had Snoop and Dre—they're entertainers. Snoop could be sitting quietly over there in a corner"—he gestured to one end of the restaurant we were sitting in—"but if Tupac were here he would create such a ruckus. People would be saying, 'That's *Tupac!*' He had star aura. Suge saw that, and he liked that. All of a sudden, there were all these pictures of Suge, together with Tupac, feeding off each other."

Once Tupac came out of prison and joined Death Row, he probably did more to stoke the flames of a much publicized feud between East and West Coast rappers than anyone. For all the posturing and the displays of bravado and the aspersions cast on everyone's integrity, this was primarily a feud about money. Rap had originated in the East, but, starting in the late eighties, the gangsta rappers from Los Angeles were more successful. Then Puffy Combs's Bad Boy Records, which was based in New York, began putting out its own version of gangsta rap—which the West insisted was merely derivative. Watani Tyehimba told me that much of Tupac's anger at Biggie Smalls, Puffy's most successful rapper, was based on professional jealousy: Tupac was in jail, and Biggie's single "One More Chance" was No. 1 on the charts. In an interview in *The Source* in March, 1996, Tupac claimed he'd been sleeping with Biggie's wife, the singer Faith Evans, and he went so far as to taunt Biggie about it in a song: "I fucked your bitch, you fat motherfucker."

Some of those close to Tupac were appalled at the Faith Evans imbroglio. (She denies that such an encounter with Tupac ever took place.) "The trouble with what Pac was doing, with this East Coast–West Coast thing, was it was just something that got out of hand, a publicity thing, but brothers in the street think something is really going on, and they're gonna die for it," Syke contended. "Pac was like a person starting a fire, and it got out of control."

When the East Coast–West Coast war was simply



"Still, he might be remembered as the 'no cloning' President."

And don't forget your sunglasses, girls—the woods are crawling with photographers!
CAMP WANNABE
Shanahan

verbal, it was useful for its marketing possibilities. But it may also have played into a real, not hyped, desire for vengeance on Knight's part, since he is said to have blamed Puffy for a close friend's murder. The feud moved to a new plane at a Christmas bash in 1995, hosted by Death Row at the Château Le Blanc mansion, in the Hollywood Hills. A record promoter from New York, Mark Anthony Bell, who is an associate of Puffy Combs, is said to have been lured upstairs to a room where Knight, Tupac, and their entourage had been drinking. Bell was allegedly tied to a chair, interrogated about the killing of Suge's friend, and hounded for the address of Puffy and Puffy's mother. He is alleged to have been beaten with broken champagne bottles, and Knight is said to have urinated into a jar and told Bell to drink from it.

Bell received an estimated six-hundred-thousand-dollar settlement from Death Row, and he declined to press charges. But a friend of Bell's told me that he had reached him in Jamaica about a month after the incident, and Bell had said to him, "I'm here till I heal. They busted me up bad!" People who were with Tupac the last year of his life are not surprised that he would be involved in something like this. "When Tupac was with Suge," one friend says, "Suge would get him all stirred up, and he'd try to behave like a gangster." He recalled another incident, in the spring of 1996, when a producer said that he wanted to leave Death Row with Dr. Dre. "He came out all bloodied up," Tupac's friend said. "And Tupac was a part of that. He had to show Suge what he was made of."

"TUPAC always wanted to be a leader, not a follower," Preston Holmes, the president of Def Pictures, who had worked with Tupac in the movies "Juice" and "Gridlock'd," says. "And in order to be on top in that world, he had to act a certain way—screwing the most women, stomping the most guys, talking the most shit. But I had conversations with him in this period, when he would say, 'Gangsta rap is dead.' I think he was trying to extricate himself."

In February, Tupac had decided to start his own production company, called Euphanasia, and he asked his old friend Yaasmyn Fula to come to L.A. to run it. Fula began trying to organize Tupac's business affairs. "We weren't getting copies of the financial accountings," she said. "We'd ask for them, and they'd send a present"—like a car. "I felt like there was this dark cloud over us. I knew so much was wrong—but Pac would say, 'Yas, you can't keep telling me things, I know what I am doing.' " Fula felt that Afeni, from whom she was becoming estranged, had been influenced by Knight's attentions and largesse. Tupac's signing with Death Row had transformed the lives of his extended family, even more than his contract with Interscope had. "They had lived lives of scarcity, worrying about the next meal, worrying about how to pay the rent," Fula says, but now they stayed at the elegant Westwood Marquis hotel for several months, racking up an "astronomical" bill. "Pac felt he was cursed with this dysfunctional family," Fula says, "although he loved them. And as his success grew, especially in the last year, this presence grew. They were *always* there."

Afeni Shakur says that "Death Row in the beginning treated us much better than Interscope had." But she suggests that she was not oblivious of the dark side of Knight and Death Row. She told me that Tupac had not allowed either Syke or Tupac's young cousins—the Outlawz, who travelled with him and whom he supported (and one of whom, Yafeu Fula, Yaasmyn's son, was shot and killed two months after Tupac's murder)—to sign with Death Row, because he "didn't want any of them to live in bondage." She also told me that when Tupac encouraged her to go out socially with Knight's mother, she believed that he was doing that in order to protect her. "Suge's mother was very nice," Afeni said, "but I never gave her my phone number. We both understood it was the rules of war."

The document that Kenner had drafted and Tupac had signed in prison stipulated not only that he would become an artist for Death Row but also that Knight would become his manager and Kenner his lawyer. For Kenner, Death Row's lawyer, also to represent Tupac was at best bad judgment and at worst a clear case of conflict of interest. And if Kenner possessed an ownership interest in Death Row as well, something which has long been rumored in Los Angeles music-industry circles but

COFFEE AND A KICK IN THE PANTS
(FORMERLY TEA AND SYMPATHY)
R. Chast

which Kenner has consistently denied, the conflict would be even more patent. It also might explain how he—a white criminal-defense lawyer who in the eighties handled some of L.A.'s most high-profile drug, racketeering, and murder cases but had virtually no experience in entertainment law—could have emerged at the top of one of the hottest black-music record labels.

Kenner's entrée, it now seems plain, came through Michael Harris. Paul Palladino, a private investigator who has worked closely with Kenner for years, told me that back in 1991 or so "David was representing Michael Harris on his appeal, and Harris introduced him to Suge." In his unfiled complaint against Death Row and Interscope, Harris alleged that he had had a prison meeting in September, 1991, with Kenner and Knight, to discuss the terms of his investment in what would become Death Row. Harris and Knight were to be equal partners, he alleged, and Kenner was to set up the corporation and help Knight manage it. (Knight and Kenner deny this.) In its first couple of years, other lawyers who were retained by Death Row told me, Kenner was doing its criminal-defense work, and he did not appear to have a broader role. But by 1995 he was, some thought, the proverbial power behind the throne. To many of Tupac's friends, the relationship between Knight and Kenner fit a familiar pattern: a black gangster who has access to the streets works in consort with a white player who is connected to levers of power in the world at large. Knight might wear a ring with the initials "M.O.B."—"Member of Bloods"—but in their eyes Kenner was the real thing.

David Kenner began to represent Tupac as his entertainment lawyer and as his lawyer for civil and criminal cases in California, but Tupac asked Charles Ogletree to continue to represent him as well. Ogletree told me that he repeatedly wrote letters to Death Row, asking to see the contract Tupac had signed with Death Row in prison and to negotiate a formal contract under more conscionable circumstances; but all his efforts, he said, were "met with silence, diversions, and outright misrepresentations."

Ogletree was also handicapped in his efforts to carry out Tupac's instructions to settle some of his numerous civil lawsuits. "Tupac came out of jail with no money. He would say, 'I want to take care of this case.' I would negotiate a settlement; he would say, 'Good, Death Row has my money, tell them to send the check.' " When the check didn't come, Ogletree continued, "I would call Kenner. He would say, 'It's in the mail.' Then, when it never arrived, he would say he was sending it FedEx. Then, when it didn't arrive, he would say he'd wire it." Ogletree added, "We should have been able to close the deal, but it was never possible. We had to go through the record company. It was as though he had no life except that given to him by Death Row."

By the late spring, Ogletree says, Tupac was carefully plotting his escape. "He had Euphanasia, he had the Outlawz, he had his movie deals—he was building something that was all to be part of one entity. . . . He had a strategy—the idea was to maintain a friendly relationship with Suge but to separate his business." The precedent of Dr. Dre's departure from Death Row did not seem especially encouraging. A music-business executive who was friendly with Dre says that Dre left because he was uncomfortable with Knight's "business practices." Dre abandoned his interest in the company in return for a relatively modest financial settlement, and Interscope facilitated the divorce by giving him a lucrative new contract. "Look at Dre," Ogletree says. "Such a brilliant, creative musician. He *started* Death Row, and in order to get out he had to give up almost everything. . . . Now, what would it take for Tupac, the hottest star around, whose success was only growing?" From a legal standpoint, Ogletree said, it was not so difficult; the contract signed in prison could be challenged. "But you have to live after that. . . . It was a question of how to walk away with your limbs attached and bodily functions operating.

"I remember seeing him just before his twenty-fifth birthday," Ogletree continued. "He felt it was a glorious day. He never imagined he'd live to be twenty-five—but there was a sadness in his eyes, because he still had these chains binding him. This was not where he wanted to be. I said, 'You can be anything you want to be.' He said, 'Can I be a lawyer?' I said, 'You'd be a damn good lawyer!' I sent him a Harvard Law School sweatshirt."

Through most of the summer, Tupac was on the set of "Gang Related," a film in which he was costarring with Jim

Belushi. The night it wrapped, Tupac celebrated by taking one of his lawyers, Shawn Chapman, to dinner at the Peninsula Hotel in Beverly Hills. He had been seeing a lot of Kidada Jones, Quincy Jones's daughter, but that didn't deter him from flirting with Chapman. She remembers him driving away from the Peninsula in his midnight-blue Rolls-Royce with the top down, playing Sinatra's "Fly Me to the Moon." It was a romantic and lighthearted interlude—and a stark contrast to the grave business Tupac was transacting.

Just a few days earlier, on August 27th, Tupac had severed a critical tie to Death Row. "He had been on the set all day, and in the studio all night," Fula recalls. "He sent us to the studio to get cassettes of what he'd done the night before—he wanted to listen to it. They said no, that Kenner wouldn't allow it. Pac went *crazy!* He fired Kenner . . . I typed the letter . . . and he gave me permission to hire another lawyer."

"Tupac waited far longer than I wanted him to," Ogletree says. But, to Tupac's more streetwise friends, firing Kenner seems impossibly rash. Syke didn't know that had happened until I told him, and when I did he looked at me for a long moment, as if he was having difficulty processing what I had said. Then he murmured—repeatedly—"He *fired* Kenner?"

"Tupac was brilliant, but he wasn't smart," another friend says. "He didn't realize, or he refused to accept, what anyone from the street would have known—that you *can't* fire Kenner, you don't leave Death Row." Suge Knight is said now to maintain that Tupac's differences were with Kenner, not with him.

KNIGHT had planned a big party at his Las Vegas club, 662 (on a phone pad the numbers spell "M.O.B."), on September 7th, following the heavyweight-boxing-title fight between Mike Tyson and Bruce Seldon. Tupac was supposed to attend with the Death Row contingent. He had just got back to L.A. from New York that morning, and he decided he was not going to Las Vegas; he told Fula he was going to Atlanta to settle problems with some relatives there, instead. But just a few hours later she learned that he had changed his plans; Knight had persuaded him to go to Las Vegas after all.

After the almost nonexistent fight—Tyson knocked Seldon out in less than two minutes—Knight, Tupac, and their entourage were on the way out of the M.G.M. Grand when they came upon Orlando Anderson, a reputed member of the Southside Crips, the Bloods' longstanding enemies. According to an affidavit that would later be filed by a detective with the Compton Police Department, some Crips had robbed a member of Death Row of his company medallion a month or so earlier; now, in the hotel, the victim is said to have whispered to Tupac that Anderson was the thief. Tupac, predictably, took off after Anderson, followed by Knight and the rest of the Death Row entourage; they set upon him, beating and kicking him, until hotel security guards arrived and broke up the melee.

Tupac went to his hotel briefly, then rejoined the others; about two hours after the fight, they were on their way to Knight's club, in a long convoy of cars. Afeni Shakur says that Kidada Jones, who was in Las Vegas that night, told her that Tupac had wanted to drive his Hummer, which is akin to a combat vehicle; but Knight, insisting that they had things to discuss, had prevailed upon Tupac to ride with him. Knight drove his black B.M.W., and Tupac rode in the front passenger seat, with his window down. A former Death Row bodyguard told me that the situation was aberrant; ordinarily, an armed bodyguard would have been riding with them, and additional armed bodyguards would follow in the car behind. This night, however, Knight and Tupac rode alone. The Outlawz were in the car behind them, with a bodyguard who was unarmed.

A white Cadillac pulled up alongside Knight's B.M.W. and a black man who was riding in it fired about thirteen shots from a .40-calibre Glock pistol into the passenger side, hitting Tupac, who struggled to get into the back seat. Knight (by his own account in a subsequent police interview) pulled him down. Tupac was hit four times; Knight's forehead was grazed. (He would later maintain he had a bullet lodged in his head.) At the hospital, Tupac went into emergency surgery, where doctors removed one shattered lung, and he was listed in critical condition. According to his mother and others who saw him over the next several days, he was first unconscious and then, because he was so agitated, he was heavily sedated. Knight, interviewed several weeks later by *Time* magazine, claimed that when he was sitting on Tupac's bed, Tupac "called out to me and said he loved me."

Tupac died on the afternoon of September 13th. Afeni says that doctors tried to resuscitate him several times, and that she then told them not to try again. She later told me that when he was thrashing about she surmised that he was trying to tell one of his cousins that he wanted him to "pull the plug." She also said repeatedly that "Tupac would not have wanted to live as an invalid."

ON March 9th, six months after Tupac was murdered in Las Vegas, Biggie Smalls, who had been singled out by Tupac as a traitor and mortal enemy, was shot in his car as he left a music-industry party in Los Angeles. No arrests have been made in either Tupac's or Biggie's murder. While the Las Vegas police would appear to have been almost lackadaisical in their approach to Tupac's murder (they made only a perfunctory attempt to question Tupac's cousins, who were riding in the car behind Knight's, for example), it is also true that in that group of witnesses—and among their peers—giving information to the police is taboo. When Knight was interviewed on "Primetime Live," he said that even if he knew who had shot Tupac, he would not say. "I don't get paid to solve homicides," he declared.

There have been many theories about who killed Tupac; one of the most prevalent rumors, which began to circulate shortly after Tupac was shot and has persisted to this day, is that Knight himself had something to do with Tupac's murder. In mid-March he gave an interview from jail to "America's Most Wanted" and said that he had not been involved. But many of those who were close to Tupac continue to suspect—based only on circumstantial evidence and their understanding of the street—that it was his attempt to leave Death Row that led to his death. Dre had managed to do it, but only by relinquishing any claim on Death Row. A music-business veteran who is close to Dre told me that "if Tupac had left Death Row . . . it would have been worse than devastating—it's an insult. It's a public slap in the face. It is not tolerable. 'I've made you and you're going to leave me? And six months after Dre did it?' In another culture," he concluded, "people sue you."

In the last few months, Knight has been buffeted by one damaging revelation after another. The Los Angeles *Times* reported in October that he had given a recording contract to the daughter of the deputy district attorney Lawrence Longo, who had helped strike his probation deal in the assault case, and also that David Kenner had rented a nineteen-thousand-dollar-a-month Malibu Colony house from the Longo family and that Knight had stayed in it. (Longo denies any wrongdoing.) Then, in December, the Los Angeles *Times* reported that Steve Cantrock, Death Row's accountant and a principal in the L.A. office of Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman, a division of Coopers & Lybrand, had signed a document saying that he stole four and a half million dollars from Death Row. Cantrock was said to have told federal investigators that he had been invited to a San Fernando Valley house where Knight, Kenner, and others were gathered, that he had been forced to his knees and, fearing for his life, signed the handwritten confession that Kenner had drafted on the spot. (Knight says that no force was involved. Cantrock denies stealing the money.) Cantrock, who is in hiding, has since been forced out by his firm. He has also been reported to have been an intermediary between Knight and alleged organized-crime figures; federal investigators have reportedly been examining possible links between Death Row and organized-crime families in New York and Chicago. When federal grand jury subpoenas were sent out last February, they focussed not only on Knight's role but on Kenner's as well.

In mid-April, Afeni Shakur filed a racketeering suit against Death Row, Suge Knight, and David Kenner, alleging that they were engaged in a conspiracy to steal from Tupac. The suit included a claim against Kenner for malpractice and breach of fiduciary duty, charging that his "purported representation of Tupac was in hopeless conflict" with his own interests—inasmuch as Kenner, the suit alleges, was both an attorney for Death Row and an owner of it. Several people close to the situation say that the suit is on the verge of being settled, and that Interscope has helped to make that possible.

Since Tupac's death, Interscope has repeatedly sought to mollify Afeni. In October, when she found Knight and Kenner unresponsive and she was threatening to block the release of Tupac's last album unless she got an accounting of the money due to him, it was Jimmy Iovine who met with Afeni and her lawyer, Richard Fischbein, and agreed that Interscope would pay her an immediate three million dollars with more to come. And it was Interscope, not Death Row, that underwrote a memorial service for Tupac in Atlanta in November.

Interscope has, in a way, been a model of corporate responsibility. Indeed, in a strictly corporate sense it has done more than was required. Tupac was not officially Interscope's artist, after all. But Interscope executives may feel a level of responsibility for having pushed Tupac into Suge's arms. And there is also a compelling business rationale for Interscope to do everything possible to quell the skirmishing between Tupac's estate and Death Row. As one lawyer close to the situation points out, if Afeni didn't get what she wanted from Death Row she would surely sue not only Death Row but Interscope as well, on the theory that the companies were so closely related as to have shared exposure. Being subject to a legal process of discovery on this issue could hardly have been an attractive prospect for Interscope—particularly in light of the ongoing criminal probe of Death Row.

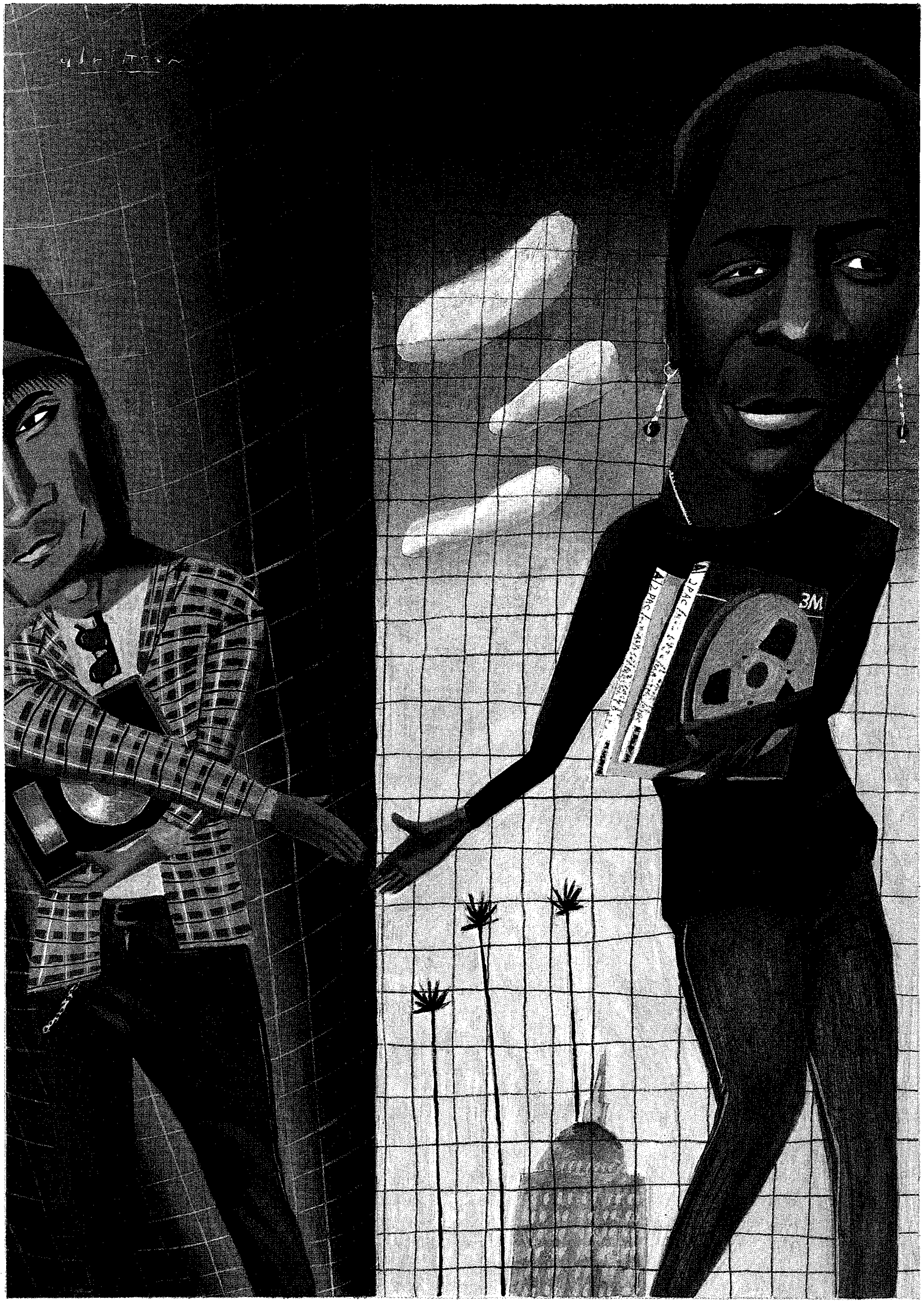
If Interscope escapes unscathed in the federal probe, Suge Knight's undoing could well prove a boon. "Joint ventures are only as successful as the operators are frugal," an executive close to Interscope points out, and at Death Row the spending was "obscene." "If they can shift the Death Row assets within Interscope, they'll come out smelling like roses—and not have the wild card of Suge and Kenner." A couple of months ago, it was reported that Seagram, the parent of Universal, is considering buying, for three hundred and fifty million dollars, the half of Interscope that Universal does not already own. This would mean a colossal profit for Iovine and Field.

To many blacks in the music business, the lack of congruency in this particular morality tale is bitterly familiar. Suge Knight has retained Milton Grimes, who defended Rodney King, to represent him in the federal investigation. Grimes argues that Death Row did not operate in a vacuum. "Their money came from Interscope, and from MCA, and they"—Interscope—"were hands-on. So if there are going to be indictments, let them take on the industry—not just this one black business."

That Interscope is widely regarded as the most successful new label since Geffen Records cannot be attributed solely to its affiliation with Death Row. Interscope has hugely successful rock groups, including Nine Inch Nails, Bush, and the Wallflowers, and the pop groups No Doubt and God's Property. But it was Death Row that rescued them from their early doldrums and that delivered one multi-platinum album after another. And the legacy of Death Row to Interscope is a rich one. "Death Row served an amazing purpose for Interscope," an entertainment executive told me. "It helped put them in the black-music business. Today, no matter what happens, they *have* that. People in that community feel that they gave a black man power. They gave a black man autonomy. They gave a black man money."

Iovine and Field did bet on Suge Knight and Dre when other companies would not. They have justified what they did by alluding to the First Amendment, and to their belief in giving a chance to black artists and entrepreneurs from the street. But Death Row was no enterprise zone. And anyone who got near it could have predicted that there would be a price to pay for its cultivation of gangsterism—in lyrics, in social conduct, and perhaps in business practices as well.

Tupac, of course, paid the heaviest price of all. ♦



Jimmy Iovine (left), the head of Interscope, is brokering a settlement in a suit brought by Shakur's mother, Afeni, against Death Row.

FICTION

THE STARE

Greek in a cold climate.

BY DORIS LESSING

“I LOOK at him,” says Helen. “I don’t say anything, and I go on looking.”

“What does he do then?” asks Mary, gazing at Helen as she so often does, as if Helen had the secret of something or other.

“Then he gives in,” says Helen, and laughs. The laugh, as always, takes Mary captive, and this time it seems to reverberate right through her, and Helen seems to be remembering something delicious, for she sits smiling.

Helen is the Greek wife of Tom, who is English. He saw her in a taverna in Naxos, where she was waiting on him and on the other foreign tourists as if she were doing them a favor, and he fell in love and persuaded her to return to England with him. Not entirely foreign ground to her, because she has relatives in the large Greek and Cypriot community in Camden Town, and she visited them one summer. Mary is the English wife of Demetrios, and she was with a girlfriend on holiday in Ándros when the handsome waiter in the café overlooking the sea fell in love with her. He, too, has relatives in London. Now he is a waiter in a Greek restaurant called the Argonauts; and he intends to have his own restaurant soon. He will call it Dmitri’s, because Dmitri is what Mary calls him. Meanwhile they live in two rooms over the grocery owned by Helen’s Tom.

The two women spend mornings together, gossiping or shopping, but now Helen has a baby and they often go to Primrose Hill and sit on a bench with the pram pushed into some shade. There are other wives, Greek and Cypriot, and some mornings it is quite a little female community, but Helen and Mary are recognized as special friends. Some evenings the two couples make a foursome in one of the pubs, cafés, or restaurants, and on these evenings Mary often congratulates herself that she made all the right choices that brought her away from boring Croydon, to be here among people who laugh easily, or start singing, and who might end an evening with impromptu dancing, even on the tables. She might not have gone to Greece that summer, might have said no to Demetrios when her parents put pressure on.

On this day Mary goes home excited and restless and sits in front of her looking glass and examines herself. She often does this. She is plump, pretty, with ruddy cheeks, black curls, and a lot of well-placed dimples, and Dmitri calls her his little blackberry. But she has gray eyes, and he says that if it weren’t for those cool English eyes he could believe she has Greek blood. His black eyes easily smolder, or burn, or reproach. Mary leans her forearms among the little bottles of scent, the lipsticks, the eye paint, and tries out expressions. She puts a long unsmiling unblinking stare on her face and frightens herself with it. She shuts her eyes, so as to see that stare on Helen’s face, but fails, because Helen only smiles. Mary admires Helen. That is putting it mildly. Because of something Dmitri said, Mary actually went to the library and found a book called “Greek Myths for Children,” and there she read that a Helen once, thousands of years ago, was a beauty, and men started a war because of her. In Greece parents called their little girls Helen, as if the name were just Betty or Joan. Helen told Mary that Mary was the Mother of God, but Mary said she wasn’t really into religion.

And why should Mary want to try out Helen’s silent staring on Demetrios? That is the trouble. Mary is full of an uncomfortable dissatisfaction with life and with herself, and this is like an accusation against her husband. She does wonder why she feels like this but has decided that she is defending herself. He is discontented because he wants to start a family, particularly now that he is seeing his friends Tom and Helen with their baby, but Mary says, “No, Dmitri, let’s wait a bit, what’s the hurry?” She really does mean to have a baby, and even soon, but she is afraid of being taken over. That’s what happens, she thinks, watching the women she sees every day. They have a baby and . . . well, I won’t be like that. And Helen isn’t, is she? She is exactly the same, as if that baby had arrived from somewhere out of the air, and she had caught it like a present someone had thrown to her. Mary is on the Pill and never forgets to take it. Dmitri says things like “One of these days I’ll throw all that junk into the rubbish.” His rough voice and hot eyes at such moments thrill Mary and remind her of earlier days.

She said to Helen, “Is Tom the same to you now?” Helen instantly understood and said, with the laugh that was like an admission that she had some secret fascinating life Mary was too much of a clod to understand, “Of course, he’s English, isn’t he? He’s just the same as when we started together.” And she examined Mary in her frank way that Mary at first thought was “tactless,” and said, “You don’t understand something. Greek men are romantic when they are courting. They kiss you a lot and they make compliments. But when you are married you are just his wife.”

The summer Mary went to Ándros, Demetrios courted her with flowers and scented soaps and chocolates, and he said she was beautiful and he had never known anything like her. He kissed her in the moonlight, and one night he even covered her hands with kisses and hot tears, too. Mary knew this was the most wonderful thing that had ever happened to her or probably would happen. It made her uneasy that this was so. What was Demetrios, then? *Who did he think*

ANDERS WENNGREN

he was—was her secret feeling. And she watched him while he was asleep, thinking, But why? But she often remembered, too, how he had been then, that summer, three years ago. Now he was as sensible as any Englishman. Like Tom, about whom Helen sighed, though smiling, saying it was lucky Tom liked his fun in bed, because otherwise she'd think he didn't love her.

A likely story, thinks Mary, who wonders why Helen said yes to Tom. He was all right, not bad-looking. "He makes me laugh," says Helen. But surely she must sometimes find him boring?

But did Dmitri still love Mary?

That night, when he rolled toward her in bed, she said, "No, I don't feel like it," trying to make herself sound like Helen when she was teasing and taunting, but she knew she had not succeeded. She had never said no before: she liked her fun in bed, too. He was as surprised as if she had said she wanted a divorce. "What's wrong with you?" he demanded. What he should have asked was "But what have I done?" though she would not have known what to reply if he had. She turned her back on him, knowing this hurt her as much as it did him: she could feel his baffled, hurt glare on her shoulders. He muttered something she was glad she had not heard. He lay awake and she did, too, but pretended to be asleep.

Next morning he kept sighing and giving her hard accusing looks. It happened that it was Saturday, and that night the two couples went to drink in the garden of a pub, and then had dinner at the restaurant where Dmitri was a waiter, but it was his night off. The women sometimes worked there as waitresses when they needed a bit extra for the housekeeping. Everyone knew them, people waved or called greetings or came to admire the baby asleep in the pram. Mary saw how Helen hung on Tom's arm and knew they were going to make love the minute they got home. When Demetrios and Mary got home he said to her, "I hope you aren't going to not feel like it tonight." He was clumsy in his sarcasm, and that made it easy for her to say, "I might or I might not," but in bed he at once attacked her, as she tried to complain to herself, but it was no good saying she didn't feel like it when it was evident to both of them that she did. "When are you going to give me a kid?" he said afterward, and he was doing something she always found frightening and exciting: he was sliding her wedding ring around and around her finger, as if he were thinking of throwing it away. "I'll see," she said, knowing she had never provoked him like this before. Then she found herself being raped. There was no other word for it. She was all slippery from the recent sex, so he could not know she was thrilled and quite dissolved and could easily have said then and there, "Yes, all *right* about the baby," if he had not been groaning into her ear, "You bitch, I want a baby. Now, not in ten years."

Next morning she did not say one word at breakfast. He didn't notice. He was taking his time with the toast and the jam and the coffee: he didn't have to be at the restaurant until eleven. This was the best part of their day, the hours before he went to work. They talked or didn't talk, and read the paper, and sometimes went back to bed. She knew that when the baby came their mornings would never be like this again. She had told him so, and he had said, "And so what." This made her feel he didn't love her. It was not until the end of this breakfast that he realized her silence was meant, and he lifted his head and looked at her, long and hard, and she looked coldly back. And then she went on with it, using the unblinking stare she had practiced before the mirror. "What the hell?" he said. "What . . . ?" She said nothing but sat in front of him and stared. It was driving him wild, she could see, and secretly she was excited, she was thrilled, and she answered not one word while he went on exclaiming and accusing and asking what the hell she thought she was doing, and then he shouted "Bitch!" at her and went off to work.

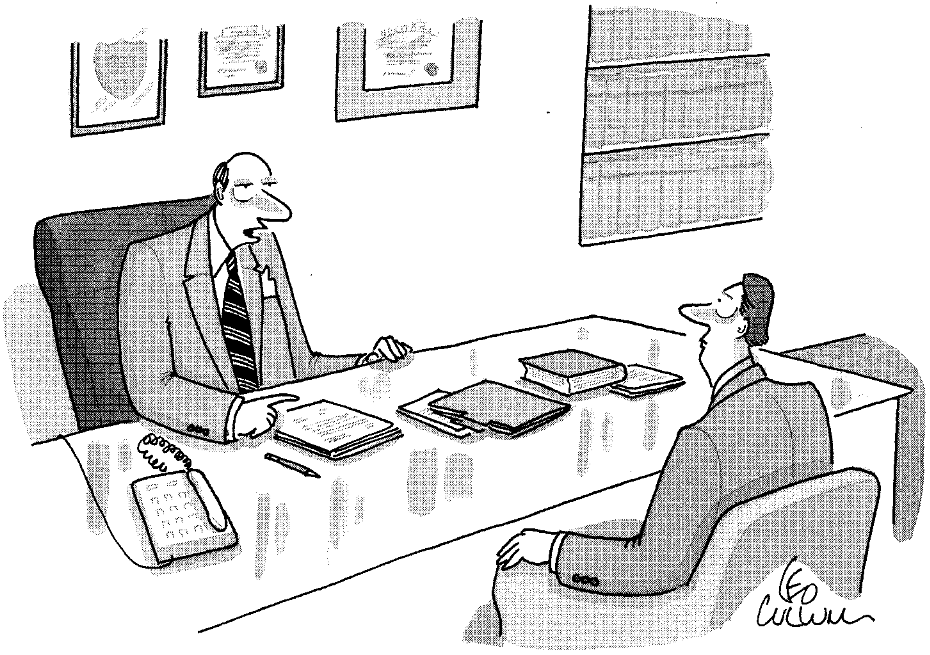
MARY sat with Helen outside a pub, in the sun, with the baby in the pram between them, and Mary thought, I don't really mind a baby, I suppose. I'll leave off the Pill and see what happens. But I'm not going to tell Dmitri, not yet. And I'm *not* going to give in to the baby.

"How long do you keep it up?" she asked, trying to sound casual, but Helen at once understood and said, "Oh, it's not much—I just like to see how long I can keep it up. Because I want to give in and I don't."

Why did Helen find everything so easy? She was talking as if it all were nothing, just a joke. Why don't I find things easy? Mary was thinking as she sat silent and dismal, looking at Helen's long thin brown legs and her brown thin arms, and the way the black dress was on her, and her black shining hair loose on her shoulders. That dress would look like a bunch on me. . . . The baby began grizzling, and Helen picked it up, no trouble at all, hardly looking, and she sang some Greek nursery song in her deep sexy voice. The baby stopped crying. The soft little head was inches away from Mary, and the sweet intimate baby smell made her want to cry. Oh, no, she thought, oh, *no*—but Helen casually handed her the cuddlesome bundle and said, "I'm going to the toilet," and off she strode, with the black linen swinging around her.

Mary thought, I suppose Dmitri will sing our baby Greek songs. When Demetrios and Helen spoke together in Greek Mary listened and she wasn't thinking of the kebabs and *taramasalata* and the retsina and all that stuff they had right here in London but of the sun on the dark-blue sea and the hot rocks and the olive trees and the singing. Often when the two Greeks talked together Tom and Mary—neither knew more than a few words of Greek—exchanged smiles acknowledging that these people they had married were sometimes strangers to them.

Mary did not speak to Demetrios that night when he came in, as usual, late, well after midnight, but she sat up in bed and stared at him while he stumbled around the room and swore and discarded his clothes anyhow and then flung himself on the bed with his back to her. She longed to put her arms around him from behind and do what he loved her to, which was nibble his ear and then kiss and bite his neck. The first time she did this it had been like jumping over a fence into the dark because she was taking the initiative, which she had not done—she liked being the one who said yes—and there was at once a storm of sex. But there wasn't always: I'm not going to let you take me for granted, said Dmitri, teasing her—she thought, but then saw this was his delicacy again, for he was sensitive, surprising her, when you'd think he was just a big rough noisy man. He knew she would be shy, afraid he would think she



"If you want justice, it's two hundred dollars an hour. Obstruction of justice runs a bit more."

• •

was asking for sex instead of sometimes just a cuddle, and that was why he kept her guessing. She had seen Helen giving Tom little touches and strokes that put a look of wonder and astonishment on his face, and she had tried them out on Dmitri—without Helen she would never have thought of doing anything like that. Now she lay beside Dmitri, rigid, and she was thinking that one night it was easy to put one's arms around one's husband and then be happy till morning, and the next night it was impossible to put out a hand to touch him, let alone kisses and nibbles.

She kept the silence going all night, for she did not sleep, and next morning through breakfast. And now she was frightened. She sat staring at him while he averted his eyes but sometimes glanced at her in wonderment, in anger, and in fear. But as well as being scared she was dissatisfied, and her dissatisfaction with everything and with him, like an accusation of him, was stronger every minute, because what she was doing was feeding it. He should be well, he should be kissing her hands and covering them with tears and saying he was sorry.

That night she was careful to seem asleep when he came in from the restaurant. Perhaps he will kiss me, she thought: he often did, when she was asleep. She would put up her arms and pull him down into her. But he didn't kiss her.

Next morning at breakfast she could see herself sitting there, with her staring face like a radar dish following him around the room. He was not looking at her, though. She thought, He's stupid. Just because I haven't got a smile on my face and I'm not speaking—but I'm just the same inside, aren't I? Meanwhile he was stumbling about and knocking into things. He looked as if she had put a curse on him. He left his coffee and banged straight out. Next morning she woke before he did, and was about to slide quietly out of bed so as not to have to "put on the performance," which was how she was now thinking of it, but he sat straight up in bed and she adjusted her face so that she was staring at him over the edge of the duvet. He let out a shout, as if he had had a nightmare, and then he began to sob, "You're a cruel woman, Mary. You're a cruel hard woman." That night he sighed in his sleep and groaned and shouted out what sounded like imprecations in Greek. It frightened her. He could kill me, she thought, and, no, she wasn't anywhere near being thrilled but decided, I'll stop it. It's enough. But she couldn't stop. An implacable accusing stare had fastened itself on her face. And she thought, But I started it all for a good reason, didn't I?

And the days passed. On an evening when the four were together Mary hoped the others would not notice that she was ignoring Demetrios and that he was doing anything to avoid looking at her. But Helen noticed, all right.

Next day Mary asked Helen, "How long do you go on with it?"

"I've never kept it up longer than a day. Well, I love him, don't I?" She sounded a bit evasive.

It was now three weeks since Mary had begun the treatment. She was in a frenzy of panic, and did not go out at all but sat weeping, and then sat silent, staring, not at Dmitri, for he was not there, but at the wall. She did not know what was happening, but it was terrible. Had she lost her husband? He was not coming in till very late, because he had been drinking. When he did he stumbled around the room swearing at her—in Greek. Then one night he didn't come home.

"What's going on with you and Dmitri?" asks Tom, meeting Mary in the street. "Are you having a quarrel?"

"Nothing like that," Mary says smiling, while she feels her life is falling apart.

In bed that night she put her arms around her drunk husband, from behind, and nuzzled up and said, "Come on, Dmitri, don't sulk." "Go to hell!" he shouted, and blubbered noisily, in a way that made her hate him, and then he suddenly fell asleep. In the morning she was up and out of bed and laid the breakfast, and when he came out of the bathroom, already putting on his jacket to go out, she held him at the door and said, "I've got a nice breakfast for you."

At which he laughed, but it was like a bark, and he shook his finger at her in clumsy sarcasm and said, "You're *talking*. You don't use words to me, so shut up, I don't want to hear you." He left.

Mary went to where Helen was with the baby. She was among a group of wives and babies. They were all laughing and talking and joggling their babies about. Was that really Helen? Was she ill or something? She looked thin, and even ugly, with her lumpy nursing breasts. And as she stood looking at Helen, thinking, But that's not what Helen is like, she thought that these days Dmitri seemed to her a fat clumsy man with a red swollen drinker's face. Mary went to join the group and saw that Helen was not moving up on the bench to make room for her. Mary pushed her way in, and her determination was such that one by one the women left and went off with their prams and pushchairs.

Now Mary told Helen the whole story, and she knew she sounded like a madwoman. Helen was pushing the pram back and forth. She pushed it one way, jiggled it up and down, pulled it back toward her, jiggled it in a long thoughtful pause, and pushed it forward again, and to Mary it seemed that the pram had become part of the listening and judging.

"You've kept it up for three weeks?" Helen said at last, with a carefulness that told Mary she was controlling an extreme reaction. Her face was severe. She might never have been Mary's best friend. "Three weeks," stated Helen. "No wonder he's sick."

"Is he sick?"

"Can't you see for yourself?" said this new Helen, with her cold bleak face, not beautiful at all. They were sitting on an ugly wooden bench outside a pub that needed painting, and wasn't all that attractive, although there were little bay trees on either side of the door. The trees needed watering and they were dusty.

"Tom said that Demetrios was too drunk to work yesterday. He'll lose his job if he's not careful."

The words "But you gave me the idea" could not get themselves off Mary's tongue. She was asking herself—and she was in the grip of the panic that seemed to be her permanent condition—why did I take what she said the way I did?

"You'd better try and make it up to him," pronounced Helen, and she got up from the bench and went off with her baby, not even smiling at Mary or saying, "See you tomorrow."

I've lost Helen, too, thought Mary. She went to sit outside the restaurant where Dmitri worked. He had an hour's break in the afternoon. When he came out she ran to him and put her hand on his arm and said, "Dmitri, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, Dmitri." She was crying and he was turning away from her and saying, "So you're sorry, and that's all you have to say. What was all that for? I wanted a kid, that's all. You're a bad woman, Mary." She could see he felt horror as he looked at her, quickly, for he was afraid that cold angry stare might appear again on her face. He tried to pull his arm away, but she held tight and said, "Please please please, please, Dmitri." He stood there half turned away, with nervous side glances at her, but avoiding her eyes, which afflicted him. She thinks, He will hate me forever, but pleads, "Please, Dmitri, come home now." The two stood close on the pavement, and people going past moved well out of their way, and she was clinging to him for dear life, for that was how it felt to her, because everything was at stake. She was weeping loudly, and he was hot and red and miserable.

Home was only a few minutes away. He went stumbling beside her and she kept tight hold of him, for he might run off and she would never see him again.

At home she tried to pull him into the bedroom, but he sat at the table with his head in his hands. "What are you thinking now?" he asked. "We'll have sex and then that's the end of it?"

"I've stopped taking the Pill, Dmitri."

"So you've stopped the Pill."

"Come to bed, please, Dmitri."

"What a way to make a baby."

She grabbed his hand to pull him up, and she was thinking, But when have I ever had to talk him into bed before? He let himself be pulled, and stumbled with her to the bed. He was weeping, with rough ugly painful sobs. She had broken him. She was not feeling anything like her little thrill of victory or the pleasant fear of their sexual games. Inside herself she was babbling, "He'll get over it, he'll forget, and we'll go back to how we were." For now it seemed to her that how they had been was wonderful, and she could not understand why she had thrown it away.

Meanwhile it certainly was not a question of making love, or even of sex, because she was holding in her hand a small limp shrinking piece of flesh, and nothing like this had ever happened before.

"Don't you do it again," he was saying, in his new rough miserable voice. "Don't you do it, I'm telling you. If you do I'll kill you. I'll just walk out and I'll never come home, so don't you do it."

He lay down on the bed, but on his back, not turned away. She insinuated herself inside his arm, lying as close as she could. "Oh, Dmitri, I'm so sorry." She was weeping but she felt better, because she had decided to hear what he had said as a kind of forgiveness. She was telling herself, "We'll forget all this in a day or two and everything will be as it was." ♦

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HIT MEN

Before the movies could blow up the world, they had to tell a story.

BY CLIVE JAMES

PETER BOGDANOVICH doesn't need a career, because he has a destiny. The same once applied to his hero Orson Welles, and it is a tribute to Bogdanovich's mind, soul, and stature—all increasingly rare attributes in modern Hollywood—that the comparative powerlessness of his mature years should remind us so much of how Welles's exultant precocity came unstuck. In at least one dimension, the comparison works to Bogdanovich's advantage: his opening moves, though uncannily assured, might not quite have ranked with Welles's for their lasting impact, but his endgame, despite a private life undeniably baroque in some of its salient aspects, is showing a lot more class. Welles wound up narrating commercials for social-climbing brands of mid-price wine, and one of the reasons for his inability to get a film financed was that he was a spendthrift: prodigal even with peanuts, he was the enemy of his own best gift. Bogdanovich, though he might never be allowed to direct another movie, looks admirably determined to keep at least one side of his best gift well tended and fruitful.

Right from the jump, he could write about the movies with a cogency that placed him in the top flight of critics, and as an interviewer he has always been without peer. His latest book, "Who the Devil Made It" (Knopf; $39.95), is just further confirmation of a quality he seems to have had since the cradle. When it comes to movies, the master of the medium is often a buff but rarely a scholar—he hasn't the time, even when he has the inclination—yet Bogdanovich somehow always managed to service his debt to the creativity of his past masters while he was busy with his own: articles and interviews, slim monographs and fat books were all done with manifest love, despite his being in a tearing hurry. Here, from the new book, is Bogdanovich on the Lubitsch Touch. First he defines it as "a miraculous ability to mock and celebrate both at once." Then he gives an example.

> In "Monte Carlo," alone in her train compartment, Jeanette MacDonald sings "Beyond the Blue Horizon" in that pseudo-operatic, sometimes not far from ludicrous way of hers, and you can feel right from the start that Lubitsch loves her not despite the fragility of her talent but *because* of it: her way of singing was something irrevocably linked to an era that would soon be gone and whose gentle beauties Lubitsch longed to preserve and to praise, though he would also transcend them.

When a critic can quote so creatively, his criticism becomes a creation in itself. Among Bogdanovich's previous volumes, "Pieces of Time" remains a model of how a miscellany of pieces can add up to a lodestone, and "This Is Orson Welles" rivals Truffaut's mega-colloquy with Hitchcock as an example of how a sufficiently instructed disciple can get his master to talk revealingly about the nuts and bolts in the mechanism of his miracles. Bogdanovich was, and remains, the kind of star student who goes on studying after he graduates.

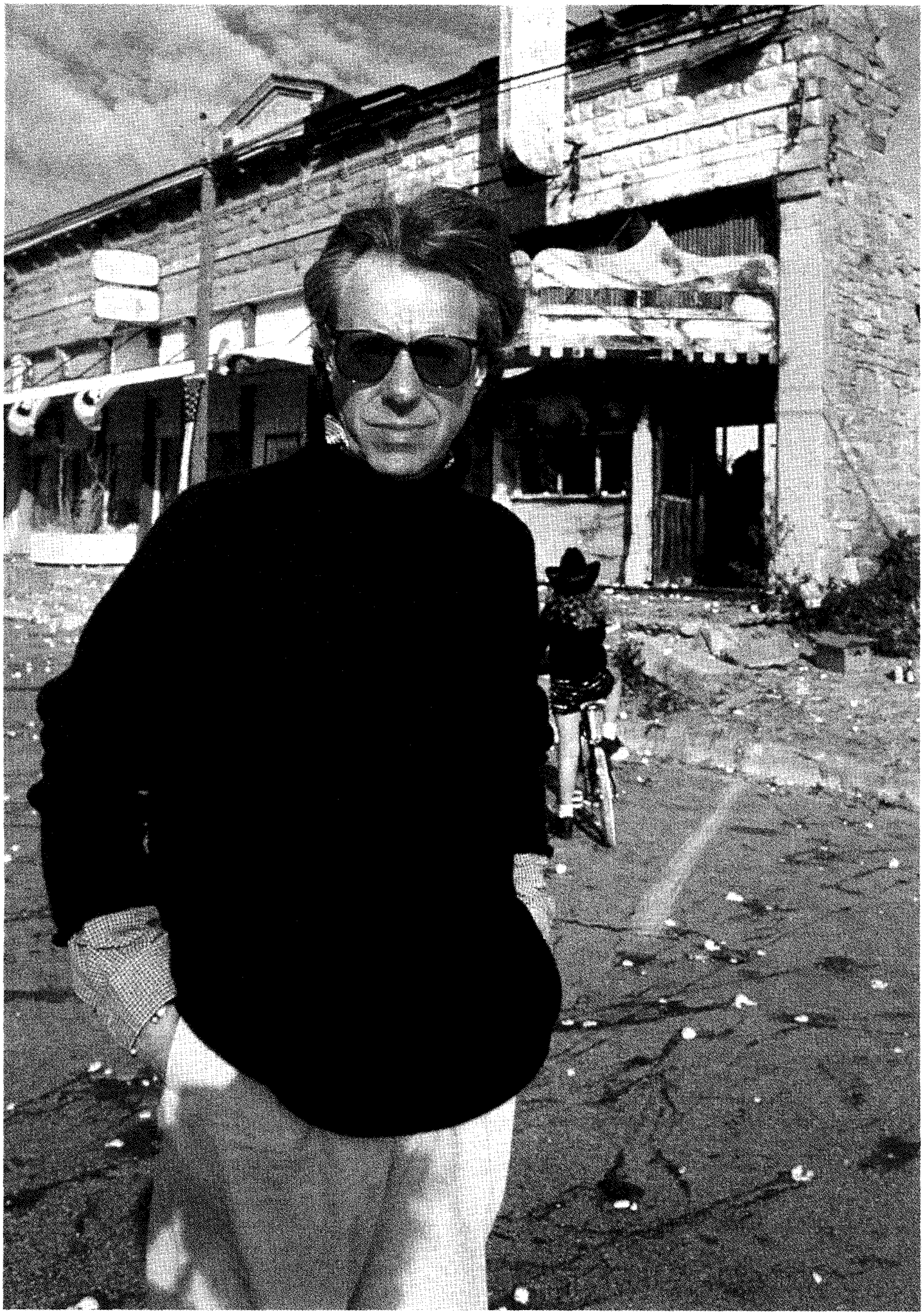
Being a star student was how he got into movies in the first place. He started off as an enthusiastic young archivist, putting retrospective screenings together for the Museum of Modern Art, in New York. Catalogues for the retrospectives would include interviews with veteran directors, conducted in extenso by Bogdanovich himself. His license to pester gained him entrée to the Hollywood studios, where in time he was allowed to try his hand as a director, perhaps because it was less trouble than showing him the door. After proving his competence with a low-budget effort called "Targets," he was off and running like Craig Breedlove. But when his run of hits—"The Last Picture Show" (1971), "What's Up, Doc" (1972), "Paper Moon" (1973)—was wrecked by the failure of the musical "At Long Last Love" (1975), his wunderkind's privilege of creative freedom was brutally withdrawn. (The memory of that deprivation must surely have been rekindled by the recent success of Woody Allen's "Everyone Says I Love You," another musical full of people who can't sing, but this time with the sour notes meeting critical approbation.)

Bogdanovich, his career as a director already in irretrievable trouble, was then stricken by tragedy on a Greek scale. In 1980, his muse and mistress, a twenty-year-old *Playboy* centerfold named Dorothy Stratten, was murdered by her low-life husband: "The Killing of the Unicorn" was what Bogdanovich titled his subsequent book about the event. On any objective scale, the Unicorn was not greatly talented as an actress, but Bogdanovich can be forgiven for thinking otherwise, because she was greatly beautiful. Unable to get over his loss, Bogdanovich began looking after her thirteen-year-old sister, whom he married seven years later; the dream lived on. But his fame faded, to the point where his name is now starting to sound foreign. Perhaps he never was a typical American in the first place. The tradition behind his work was American, but the way he *thought* of it as a tradition was European. Now that the work has dried up, the thoughtfulness remains, and might well be his lasting contribution.

Extraordinarily concerned in his films with the integrity of his technique and the burden of what he was saying with it, he has shown in his publications where he got that concern from: his predecessors. He was Hollywood's Mr. Memory even while he was its golden boy. Now that he has become the Man in the Iron Mask, he is free to cultivate the archives at his leisure. Executives who played a part in condemning him to strangle in his own beard might be in for an unpleasant surprise. What makes them pygmies is that there once were giants: it's a cliché, but on the strength of

STEVE SCHAPIRO/GAMMA LIAISON

Bogdanovich on the set of "Texasville," in 1989. The director has lived a story so sadly strange that not even he could make a movie of it.



the documentation assembled in "Who the Devil Made It," Bogdanovich looks as if he might raise it to the status of an axiom.

The book comprises interviews with veteran filmmakers—Allan Dwan, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, Fritz Lang, Sidney Lumet, Leo McCarey, Otto Preminger, Don Siegel, Josef von Sternberg, Raoul Walsh, and others less famous though sometimes even more ready with illuminating war stories of their craft. These were (and sometimes are: a few yet breathe) men rooted in history as much as in Hollywood. Their collected memories make the past look fearfully rich beside a present that is poverty-stricken in everything except money. "Whoever invented spending millions of dollars has absolutely ruined the picture business," Allan Dwan told Bogdanovich in the late sixties. It might have sounded like an old man's bitterness then. Said today, it would simply sound accurate—except, of course, for the amount of money. For "millions" read "hundreds of millions." A mere million buys you one pout from Val Kilmer in "The Saint" and maybe two drops of sweat from Tom Cruise in "Mission: Impossible" as he hangs there reprising the heist scene from "Topkapi" at a hundred times the outlay for a tenth of the impact. Today's blockbusters, despite the technical bravura of their components, rarely strike us as being very well put together: the tornado twists, the mountain blows up, the dinosaurs eat the scenery, and you are supposed to be lost in wonder, but instead you are left wondering why you are meant to care, because the characters risking death have never been alive and there would be no story without the scenes that interrupt it. The special effects leave NASA looking underfunded, yet the general effect, despite oodles of expertise, is one of a hyperactive ineptitude—of the point missed at full volume, as in the unstoppable monologue of a clever, spoiled child. Mountains of money in labor give birth to ridiculous mice. There's a reason, and this book's radiant bullion of reminiscence illuminates what it is.

To put it bluntly, the old guys had to tell a story because they couldn't blow up the world. There were limitations you couldn't spend your way out of, and in overcoming them lay the essence of the craft, its economy and brio. Don Siegel says it for all the others when he unveils the secret of shooting on the back lot: "For instance, if there's an area which looks weak, I decide that I'll pan down to the feet of the guys walking and then come up where the area's good. . . . At the moment where it's weak, I'm closest to the feet. This is no hard and fast rule, just an example." When you remember that one of the main reasons that "Heaven's Gate" nearly bankrupted United Artists was that Michael Cimino couldn't live with the idea of a background that looked weak for even a single square yard, you realize that there is a whole aesthetic, and hence a morality, embodied in Siegel's attitude. To accept and transcend limitation can be a source of creative vibrancy, whereas to eliminate it with money almost always leads to inertia. On his seventeenth, and last, day of shooting "Baby Face Nelson," Siegel did fifty-five separate camera setups, and they're all in the picture. ("It cost $175,000 to make," Siegel told Bogdanovich, "and it took a lot of bookkeeping to make it *up* to $175,000.") Warren Beatty, given the choice, would have gone on editing "Reds" forever, but no amount of editing could lend tension to the footage, in which only Jack Nicholson behaved as if he owned a watch. "Reds," a pioneering effort in the annals of modern wastage, was made in order to indulge the creative whims of its maker. "Baby Face Nelson" was a cynical, cost-conscious piece of exploitation. Which was the work of art? All right, which would you rather see again tonight?

Reality is a useful brake on megalomania. Besides this key point (continually and hearteningly endorsed by almost everyone in the book), there is plenty of other stuff that merits thoughtful attention from the current generation of moviemakers, who so often not only can't do anything small but don't even want to, except as a career move on the way toward doing something big. Leo McCarey took credit for very few of the hundred or so Laurel and Hardy films that he was effectively responsible for, but his vision shaped that of his actors. "At that time," he says, "comics had a tendency to do too much." (There has never been a time when they had any other tendency, but let that pass.) In "From Soup to Nuts," Hardy as the maître d' came in to serve a cake. He tripped, fell, and buried his head in the cake. It was McCarey who shouted (in 1928 the audience couldn't hear him), "Don't move! Just don't move! Stay like that!" Seeing it now, all you get to look at is Hardy's back, stockstill as you rock back and forth with the best kind of laughter—the kind you bring to the joke, participating in it with your imagination.

THE movies are a collaborative art, then—or, rather, they were a collaborative art *then*, back at a time when the audience didn't feel left out. But this is to talk like a curmudgeon. Actually, there are more good, solid, humane, well-plotted, and well-acted movies being made now than ever before. Compare a densely textured political thriller like "City Hall" with the average F.B.I. gangbusting melo of the forties—one of those movies in which the agents sneak up on the spies while a yelping commentator on the soundtrack tells you what they are doing (sneaking up on the spies). But there is no comparison. The movie business now is immeasurably more sophisticated than it used to be. Sophistication, however, is a two-edged sword. It abrades the innocent delight necessary for the making of, say, a screwball comedy. (Bogdanovich's triumphant latter-day contribution to the genre—"What's Up, Doc?"—is the surest testimony that we should put the best possible construction on everything that has happened to him since the death of Dorothy Stratten: only a man capable of deep love could celebrate a wild girl's pilgrim soul with so much joy.) And, above all, it erodes the concept of a modest sufficiency. It ought not to—in almost any other field, the sophisticated rein themselves in—but in the movies it somehow does. People who have made small, intelligent movies dream of making big, dumb ones, persuading themselves that if all values except production values are left out some kind of artistic purity will accrue.

So the creators get carried away. And they want to carry us away with them, but without giving us anything to hold on to except a train being chased by a helicopter through a tunnel. To adapt the famous words of Gertrude Stein, it is amazing how we are not interested. The hero *couldn't* be doing that, even if it looks as if he were, so the only point of interest is how they worked the trick. Whereas in the old days, even if he didn't especially look as if he were doing that, he *could* have been doing that. So we were with him, and we didn't care how they worked the trick. We let them care. That was their job. They didn't expect to have articles written about it, or to be interviewed—least of all in advance, before the movie was even finished. They worked from pride, but the pride was private. Somewhere in there is the difference between then and now. Then we participated in the movie without participating in its making. Now it's the other way around, and now will pretty soon become intolerable if we don't remember then. This book will help, like all of Bogdanovich's other books.

It might even help us remember his movies, which were marked from the beginning by a rare compassion for those blasted by fate. The great scene in his first great success, "The Last Picture Show," was when Ben Johnson told the normal boys off for their "trashy behavior" in humiliating a half-wit. In one of his later movies, "Mask," the director's challenge, met with subtlety and grace, is to transmit the awful self-consciousness of a superior mind as its grotesque containing skull closes in on it. Bogdanovich's understanding of fate's unbiddably cruel workings is rare among filmmakers anywhere in the world and almost unheard of in America. He seems to have been blessed with it from birth. But the blessing brought a curse with it. Fate came for him, too. The killing of the Unicorn left him disconsolate. Since then, he has been living a story so sadly strange that not even he could plausibly make a movie of it. One would like to believe that he doesn't want to, since without a deep, literate conviction that the movies can't do everything, he would have less of a gift for celebrating everything they have done. ♦

WOMEN AT WAR

A case of sexual harassment.

BY JANET MALCOLM

Helen Garner

THOMAS J. CURRY

"THE FIRST STONE," by Helen Garner (Free Press; $24), is a work of personal journalism which can be likened to a novel with an unreliable narrator. It is the story of the author's thwarted attempt to write a "quiet, thoughtful account" of a case of sexual harassment in Melbourne, Australia, and of the remarkable, almost vertiginously turbulent narrative she was forced by her frustration to produce instead. Two young women have filed complaints of indecent assault against the Master of Ormond College, a residential college of Melbourne University, where they are students. One woman, pseudonymously named Nicole Stewart, says that, six months earlier, the Master, while dancing with her at a student party, put his hand on her left breast; and the second, pseudonymously named Elizabeth Rosen, says that during the same party he made indecent suggestions to her in his locked office (and felt her up as well).

When Helen Garner, who is an Australian novelist, screenwriter, and journalist, reads about the first woman's complaint in the newspaper (she reads about the second woman a few weeks later), she is stunned. Garner came of age in the early years of the women's movement and is possessed of a finely tuned feminist consciousness. But this case seems to her a very betrayal of feminism and its claims to

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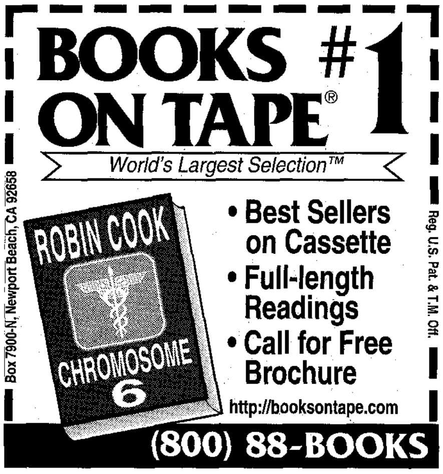

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good faith. Has the world come to this? she thinks. "He touched her breast and she went to the *cops*?" Impulsively, she dashes off a letter to the accused, a middle-aged man she calls Colin Shepherd:

> Dear Dr. Shepherd,
>
> I read in today's paper about your troubles and I'm writing to say how upset I am and how terribly sorry about what has happened to you. I don't know you, or the young woman; I've heard no rumours and I have no line to run. What I want to say is that it's heartbreaking, for a feminist of nearly fifty like me, to see our ideals of so many years distorted into this ghastly punitiveness. I expect I will never know what "really happened," but I certainly know that if there was an incident, as alleged, this has been the most appallingly destructive, priggish and pitiless way of dealing with it. I want you to know that there are plenty of women out here who step back in dismay from the kind of treatment you have received, and who still hope that men and women, for all our foolishness and mistakes, can behave towards each other with kindness rather than being engaged in this kind of warfare.

The sending of this letter is the act that fuels the book's plot—it is the misstep whose consequences we watch the author helplessly struggle to undo for two hundred pages. After Shepherd is acquitted in court of both women's charges (for lack of proof) but is predictably ejected from the university, to which he is no longer of use as a "good father" figure, Garner decides to write about the case and "its wider meanings." Although sympathetic to Shepherd, she is hardly convinced of his innocence. She has lived in the world long enough to know that men are beasts and that the probability is strong that Shepherd forgot himself at the party. She happily sets about her journalist's task of interviewing both sides, getting each antagonist's version of what happened, and then writing her "truthful, calm, and balanced" account. But it is too late: she has shot herself in the foot with her letter to Shepherd. She did what a journalist must never do—she showed her hand too early—and Nicole Stewart and Elizabeth Rosen, who have read the letter (Shepherd couldn't resist circulating it), naturally refuse to speak to her. Garner's increasingly desperate and hysterical efforts to interview the young women are the action of the book.

As Garner pursues the young women, we see that more is at stake than the fate of a piece of journalism, that something beyond journalistic zeal impels her, and that her dilemma as a reporter reflects dilemmas of more fundamental kinds. In her attempt to shatter the Cordelia-like silence of Nicole Stewart and Elizabeth Rosen, Garner seeks out their young feminist supporters, abjectly pleading with them to intervene for her; but she is met at every turn with coldness and condescension. During a particularly humiliating interview with one of these chilly interlocutresses, an officer of the university Student Union, Garner begins to twig to the "wider meaning" of her quest:

> Her seat was slightly higher than mine; she was looking down at me, and the light from a high north-facing window behind her was so strong that I had to keep blinking and turning away to rest my eyes. I felt terrifically at a disadvantage, as if I were importuning her. In fact, this sense of being out of date, irrelevant, reminded me painfully of certain days when I have visited my daughter and she had gone about her business in the house as if I weren't there. So this is about middle-aged mothers and daughters, then.

Garner goes to a feminist of her own age for comfort:

> I related to my friend my pathetic bravado in the presence of the fierce young Women's Officer from the Student Union. "I practically pleaded for her respect," I said. "I talked about abortion law reform, demos and police and so on—I said, 'We put our bodies on the line'—but she just looked at me coldly—she didn't give a shit about our *magnificent heroism*."
>
> We sat at the table howling with laughter. "It's a dialogue between generations," said Angela Z—, wiping away the tears.
>
> "It's not a dialogue," I said, blowing my nose. "It's a fucking *war*."

THE war between the generations is a peculiar war, unlike a war between nations. One of the sides—the older generation—is in love with as well as threatened by the other. The old try to warm themselves at the fire of the young. "King Lear" is about (among all the things it is about) a man trying to escape death through incestuous sex. A middle-aged teacher sexually harassing a student is an actor trying to remain in a play where he has no lines. What makes "The First Stone" such an extraordinary book, a book unlike any other study of sexual harassment, is Garner's enactment—in her obsessive pursuit of Nicole Stewart and Elizabeth Rosen—of the very misdemeanor she has set out to investigate. Although her purported goal is "balance," it is as a very unbalanced person that she represents herself. "I wanted to find Elizabeth Rosen and Nicole Stewart and *shake them till their teeth rattled*," she writes upon receiving another rebuff from the young women. "I gnashed my teeth so hard I saw stars," she writes on hearing that they have agreed to give interviews to a writer from *Vogue*. "*Vogue!*" These are not the reactions of a seasoned journalist but the ravings of a rejected lover. "I felt so much sympathy for the man in this story and so little for the women," Garner had wonderingly written at the beginning of her account, worrying that "my feminism and my ethics were speeding towards a head-on smash." Now she is in the grip of something to which feminist theory and ethical belief are irrelevant, and which has degraded the original object of her interest to the status of worthless money. Garner's interview with the ruined Master is a perfunctory affair. She listens to his denials politely but indifferently. Only the interviews she can't get excite her.

In the end, Garner all but "knows" that Shepherd did it, not because she has discovered any evidence of his guilt but because of her experience as a woman. If she cannot wrest the young women's version of what happened from them, she will supply an equivalent from the store of her own memories of being importuned. She recalls an incident from her youth: she was sitting in an empty train compartment, contentedly reading, when a loutish middle-aged man, who had been drinking, came in and engaged her in unwelcome and tedious conversation, from which she felt helpless to extricate herself, and then asked her for a kiss, which she helplessly gave him. Garner meditates on the "strange passivity" that overcomes women in these situations:

> What was my state, that allowed me to accept his unattractive advances without protest? I was just *putting up with him.* I felt myself to be luckier, cleverer, younger than he was. I felt sorry for him. I went on putting up with him long past the point at which I should have told him to back off. *Should have*? What *should* is this? What I mean is *would have liked to. Wanted to but lacked the . . . the . . .* Lacked the what?

Another shaming memory—this one of more recent vintage, involving a male masseur who kissed the back of her hand and then her mouth while she lay near-naked on the massage table, and whose importunities she once again accepted without protest (she even paid for the massage!)—gives her further empathic understanding of Nicole and Elizabeth's behavior: of why they had accepted the Master's unattractive advances without remonstrance, and only much later lodged their complaints against him. She writes:

> What woman would not feel a shot of rage at the QC's question to Nicole Stewart: "Why didn't you slap 'im?"
>
> We all know why.
>
> Because, as Nicole's friend said angrily in court, all we want to do when a man makes a sleazy, cloddish pass is "to be polite and get away."

But Garner cannot sustain her feminist's rage. In spite of "these sharp flashes of empathy with the girls . . . something in me, every time, slams on the brakes. . . . I invent and discard a dozen fantasies of less destructive responses to such an incident. . . . I see myself marching into some man's office and saying, 'I don't know what you tried on my daughter. This time I'm prepared to let it pass. But I'm warning you—if anything like this ever happens again, you can expect big trouble.' " Garner's fantasy of the "less destructive response" gives her away, of course. "This time I'm prepared to let it pass." This isn't good enough. This is closing ranks with the abuser. This is paying for the massage. Sexual harassment isn't sexual abuse—exactly. It lies on the border between a crime and a mistake. It is a minor offense with major associations. Garner's oscillating identifications with harasser and harassed, her lurchings between generations and genders, her alternating states of delusion and perception invite comparison with the coded messages of patients in psychotherapy. In the unconscious we are children and parents, old and young, victim and aggressor, gay and straight all at once. In an Afterword Garner unnecessarily defends her book against the criticism it has received from feminists in Australia. It no more needs defending than our dreams do, with which there is no arguing, and which are always true. ◆

BRIEFLY NOTED

The Untouchable, by John Banville (Knopf; $25). Victor Maskell, nearing the end of his life, has been revealed as a former Soviet spy. This tabloid outing is so distasteful to Victor—son of a bishop, author of an influential monograph on Poussin, part of a rarefied gay Cambridge clique, confidant to H.M. the King—that you can almost hear his bones creak as he stoops to answer the ruinous allegations. Victor's apologia is stunningly unapologetic: his "Bolshie" youth, grim marriage, and hushed assignations (both sexual and strategic) roll by with a dreamy kind of stoicism that the author renders with characteristic virtuosity.

Murder in the Museum of Man, by Alfred Alcorn (Zoland; $23.95). In the dog-eat-dog world of academe, the author of this adroit, hilarious sendup contends, cannibalism is but a jaw flap away. Mr. Alcorn, who just happens to work at Harvard, is as adept at lampooning a faculty meeting (on the need for minority representation in a diorama depicting Neanderthals) as he is at dissecting the fugitive love life of his sleuth, Recording Secretary Norman de Ratour, an endearing pompous ass who has carried a torch for a lieder-singing coed for more than thirty years.

Jane Austen: Obstinate Heart, by Valerie Grosvenor Myer (Arcade; $25.95). The accomplishment of this biography is to place Austen squarely amid the squawk and isolation of eighteenth-century life. While the question of character and its relation to genius (how a maiden aunt, famously without a room of her own, became one of the great English stylists and our consummate romance novelist) remains largely unplumbed, Myer's steady approach does supply the reader with a lot of welcome information, such as Austen's stand on adultery (against) and green slippers (for).

Inventing Kindergarten, by Norman Brosterman (Abrams; $39.95). Kindergarten may feel as if it's been around forever, but it's actually a fairly recent innovation. In the mid-nineteenth century, Friedrich Froebel, a German crystallographer, devised a rigorous arts-and-crafts program centered on play with two- and three-dimensional geometric forms (cut and folded paper, wooden sticks, modelling clay). By teaching children to think abstractly, Froebel's system provided the seedbed for modern art, and the juxtaposition here of nineteenth-century kindergarten work with the work of Braque, Klee, Mondrian, and Frank Lloyd Wright will make you gasp. This is a revelatory book, and one that gives new meaning to the derisive snort "My kid could do that."

Why History Matters: Life and Thought, by Gerda Lerner (Oxford; $30). Everything Gerda Lerner says matters. As one of the founding mothers of women's history, she invariably connects even the most arcane morsels—for instance, what kinds of women were allowed to wear veils in ancient Middle Assyria—to something that touches us now. Her sensitivity and her scholarship shine in essays arguing that class, gender, and race are social constructs—damaging inventions that contemporary thought is trying to dismantle.

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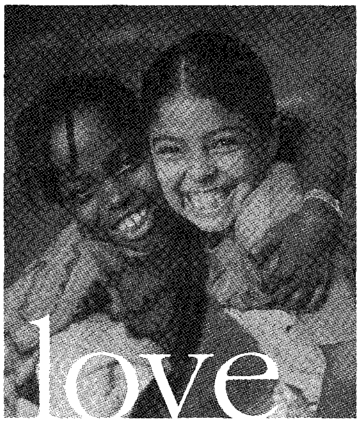

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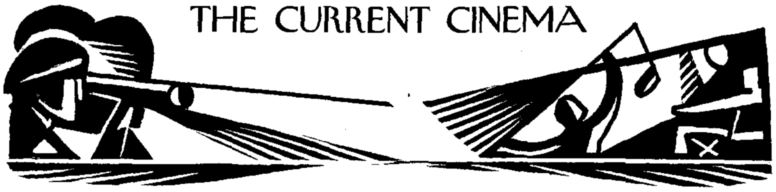


SUMMER OLYMPICS

"Men in Black," "Batman & Robin," "Hercules," etc.

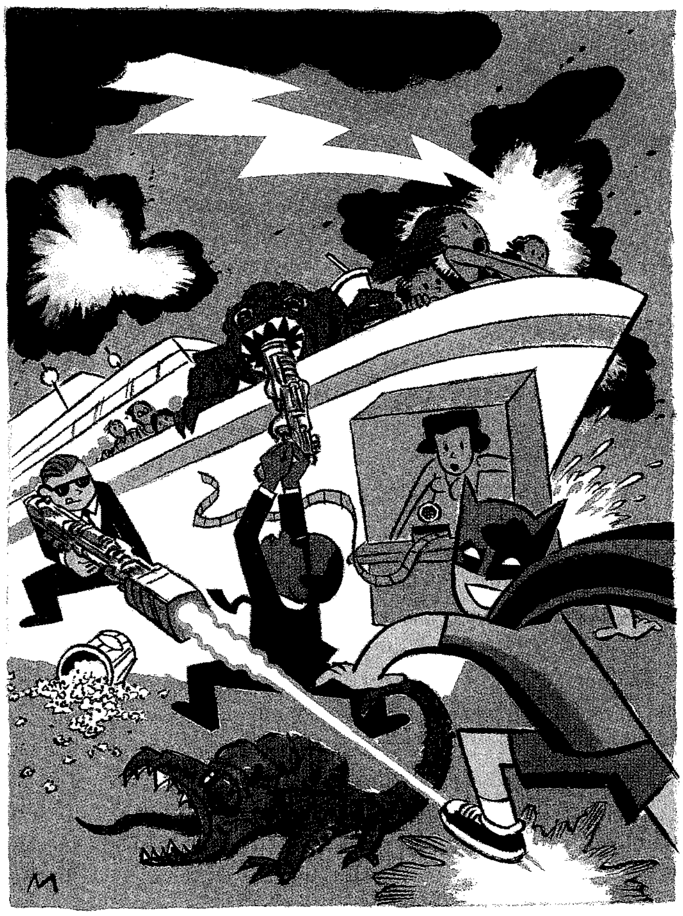
BY ANTHONY LANE

IT'S that time again. The studios roll out the summer blockbusters, and we all wait to see just how thoroughly they can bust our blocks off. Thus far, almost everything is running scared of "The Lost World": it may be fun to watch soft-shelled humans being cracked by raptors, but it's even more enjoyable to watch movies that were a long time in the making—and longer still in the hyping—getting munched into little morsels by Spielberg. Now we have a new bunch of offerings on the menu, the tastiest of which is "Men in Black." Written by Ed Solomon and directed by Barry Sonnenfeld, this picture is easy—indolent, confident, and shy of risks, but so relaxed that you can hardly be bothered to complain.

The Men in question are Agent K (Tommy Lee Jones) and Agent J (Will Smith), who dress like the Blues Brothers, or like the Misters of "Reservoir Dogs," and spend their days policing the activities of resident aliens. It appears that at any time there are some fifteen thousand foreign bodies on the planet, most of them in Manhattan, and a few of them in your immediate circle of friends. One of the pleasures of Sonnenfeld's project, in fact, is his determination to make a solid and unabashed New York movie—not just in its locations but in the crackle of passing gags at the expense of Queens and Staten Island. (How all this will play in the all-important Far Eastern video market that movie distributors keep yakking on about is anybody's guess.) Most aliens, it appears, are law-abiding citizens, who like to keep all three noses clean, but there are a few rogue elements to be arrested and, when necessary, splattered. The plot requires our heroes to track down an outsize bug that lodges inside the body of a farmer (Vincent D'Onofrio), who travels to New York in order to destroy the entire planet and generally have a good time.

The story is perilously thin, close to ignorable. Maybe that's deliberate; as in his "Addams Family" movies, Sonnenfeld is far more concerned with wrapping us in texture. The title of the new film sounds like a scholarly study of his complete works; no other director is so enthralled by black as a color and a mood, so eager to stretch its possibilities. The fetishistic gleam of the men's car is spectrums away from the flat black of their suits, or from the sharp shadows in which they hunt their quarry, or from the funereal fug so beloved of Morticia Addams. Against it you have the blaring brightness of the men's headquarters and of the Guggenheim Museum, not to mention the daft white plastic pod in which Agent J is hunched when he first applies for the job. Thanks to a kind of double-jointed chronology, Sonnenfeld delivers a nineties take on a sixties idea of what the future—a nineties future, for instance—would be like. It's a hip way to cover your back; it saves you, for one thing, from the embarrassment of a picture like "2001: A Space Odyssey," where the shuttle attendants sported beehive hats that simply screamed 1968.

The trouble with "Men in Black" is that whenever the camera wanders away from Smith and Jones your attention goes with it; even Linda Fiorentino, as a horny medical examiner, feels irrelevant to the action. At the other end of the personal-grooming scale, the monsters on show are moist, blubbery, and somehow rather obvious: the joke, like the fright, wears off fast. Agent K has a neat little gizmo, flashing and phallic, that erases the memory of people who have just witnessed alien activity, and you can't help wondering whether Sonnenfeld is using the same device on his audience; I, for one, could remember virtually nothing about "Men in Black" the day after I saw it. The plot and the special effects had slid from my brain, leaving only a vague conviction that Tommy Lee Jones was back in form and registering levels of cool that would cause most actors to snap in half. Will Smith is speedy and high-spirited, and he runs with the picture, but Jones does something more cussed—he trips it up, and stalls it for a second, and stares unsmilingly at its gunk-coated farce. There's a tremendous moment when Smith apprehends an alien and reports his findings to Jones: "He said the world was coming to an end." Jones, without a flicker: "Did he say when?" More than ever, we need men like Jones to come to the aid of the party. When movies grow as bendy as cartoons, it becomes a matter of honor, not just of style, that someone continue to play it straight.



DAVID MAZZUCCHELLI

COULD Jones have saved "Batman & Robin"? He didn't manage it with "Batman Forever"—never was there a more ominous title—and it seems increasingly likely that the Batman pictures will swallow and regurgitate any actor who tries to get in their way. "Batman & Robin" is the fourth Warner Brothers installment, but it feels like the forty-fourth. Is it really only two years since Chris O'Donnell tried to convince us, and himself, that he looked good in leather? He is one of the old hands in this movie; newcomers include George Clooney as Batman, Alicia Silverstone as Batgirl, and Arnold Schwarzenegger and Uma Thurman as a pair of fresh villains—Mr. Freeze and Poison Ivy. This is quite a lineup, boasting a broad choice of dramatic styles, and what lends the movie cohesion and integrity is the fact that all those involved have come up with their worst imaginable performances. Even Clooney's bedroom smile makes no impact; if anything, I suspect an imminent case of Caruso syndrome, which causes actors to quit well-written TV shows in favor of movies that are barely written at all. The guilty party in "Batman & Robin" is Akiva Goldsman, whose script is a magnificent anthology of duds. I was especially pleased to learn that Batgirl had attended "Oxbridge Academy." Would that be in Royal England?

The plot is all about our old friend global domination. "First Gotham, and then . . . the world!" cries Mr. Freeze, whose hobbies consist of blasting innocent people with his ice gun, exclaiming "Ha-ha-ha!," and, in his quieter moments, stealing diamonds, which he then plugs into himself as if they were batteries. In his quest for power, Mr. Freeze joins forces with Poison Ivy, a former research scientist, whose principal weapons of mass destruction are bad breath and bright-green pantyhose. Poor Uma Thurman; Goldsman wrote a few speeches for her but forgot to provide anyone she could address them to, so she wanders round delivering monologues in a void, stopping her sentences in odd. Places in order to. Make them. Sound strange and vol. Uptuous.

The action sequences, one of which is apparently modelled on "Starlight Express," are choreographed with so little care that it's impossible to work out who is doing what to whom. You sit there feeling brain-damaged and praying for the mayhem to cease; when it finally does, along comes one of the quiet and thoughtful scenes, which are somehow even worse. It is tempting to dismiss "Batman & Robin" as simply inept, but the crassness goes deeper than that. I thought I smelled something truly corrupt in this film: its expectation of what we expect from movies is so low and snarling that you come out feeling not just swindled but mildly humiliated. In its blending of the humorless and the apocalyptic, in the intolerance that it borrows from its own bad guys, and in its strutting preference for superhuman grandeur over the small scale of human activity, "Batman & Robin" inches close to a fascist aesthetic. Also, the back projection looks crummy. And Alicia Silverstone should stop chewing her lip.

THERE is less to object to in "Speed 2: Cruise Control," although I am thinking of suing Twentieth Century Fox for breach of contract, on the ground that most of the film is set on a boat. Not a wave-slapping powerboat, you understand, but a hulking great cruise liner that looks like a luxury fridge-freezer. It boasts many original features, including tacky shopping malls with matching customers, and an official madman in residence named Geiger (Willem Dafoe), who wants to ram the vessel into an oil tanker. But where, pray, is the speed? I can bicycle faster than this ship. I know people who can *swim* faster. If things carry on like this, we can look forward to "Speed 3" taking place on the back of a pony.

The day is saved by a loving young couple—Annie (Sandra Bullock), who hails from the first "Speed," and a cop called Alex (Jason Patric), who doesn't. Their task is to try to get engaged during a Caribbean cruise, although they soon lay aside such frivolities and proceed with the serious business of thwarting Geiger. This could have proved gripping, but the director, Jan De Bont, has grown awfully casual since the rush-hour momentum and crisp compositions of the original movie; "Speed 2" has a plot with split ends and an unsuitable fondness for fidgety, handheld shots. Jan De Bont pretending to be John Cassavetes is not a pretty sight. It's worth sitting through the picture for the sake of a great closing stunt, when Alex has to harpoon a seaplane, but I still left the theatre drenched in disappointment and missing Keanu Reeves. What is Jason Patric, after all, but Keanu without the passion, fire, and intellect?

I have a similar problem with Hercules, the star of "Hercules"—the new Disney adventure, that is, in which our youthful hero loses his godhood and has to slum it as a mere mortal. I would support these efforts more keenly if he weren't such an obvious retread of Aladdin—all chin and forelock, but with weaker tunes—and if the scary ambush sequence weren't set in exactly the same kind of valley that trapped Simba in "The Lion King." Most of this picture feels secondhand, in fact, right down to the what's-a-Grecian-earn gag, which is so old hat that even Aristophanes threw it out.

The only good news is the presence of James Woods as the voice of evil: "The name is Hades, Lord of the Dead. Hi, how ya doing?" I wonder what the Southern Baptists make of him. Two weeks ago, they voted to boycott Disney and all its works, which are said to be promulgating un-Christian values. This is perfectly true of Hades, who, like most Disney villains, gives naughtiness a good name. There is a pathetic attempt at spiritual correctness in the case of the Greek muses, who are reduced in number from nine to five, and who claim to be providing "the gospel truth." Wrong culture, girls. And what ever happened to the twelve labors of Hercules? He pulls off two or three and then calls it a day, the little wimp. As far as I could gather, the only thoroughly pernicious aspect of this movie is its unblushing will to sell itself: Hercules' personal trainer, a randy satyr named Phil, tells him that he needs "a satyr but wiser / a good merchandiser," and the rhyme is prophetic. Like "Batman & Robin," the new Disney film contains an undisguised plug for American Express; even worse, there's a musical montage on the theme of our hero's growing prestige which is little more than a stylized commercial for Hercules sports drinks and other spinoffs. I saw the picture at the New Amsterdam, on Forty-second Street, where the screening is preceded by a half-hour stage show. The dancers leave through the audience, so if you fork out fifty-five dollars for a seat in the orchestra, you just may get a handshake from a pink plush hippo. After the movie, the kids may want to visit the Disney store, which is conveniently located next door. All in all, I'm with the Southern Baptists on this one. They're targeting the right people, but for the wrong reasons. Subsidizing "Pulp Fiction" or "Ellen" is as nothing compared with the Olympian moneygrubbing that's going on around—and within—Disney's "Hercules." Beware of gifts bearing Greeks.

WHAT would Jerry Prokosch make of these movies? Would he like to make them for himself? Let's face it, he's a successful producer, and "Hercules" would represent not just a sound investment but a respectable role model. "I like gods," says Jerry. "I like them very much. I know exactly how they feel." The only obstacle here—and it's by no means insuperable—is that Jerry doesn't exist. He is a great, gaunt monster in a little red sports car, and he's played by Jack Palance, in Jean-Luc Godard's "Contempt." This is showing at the Film Forum and the Walter Reade Theatre in a ravishing new print, which brightens the glow of greatness that has surrounded the film ever since it first appeared, in 1963.

Prokosch is putting together a film of Homer's Odyssey, which is being directed by Fritz Lang (playing himself) and was scripted by Paul (Michel Piccoli). All of which would seem to confirm the idea that here, rather dauntingly, is a movie about movies. But "Contempt" feels at once broader and more pointed than that. Much of it is a portrait of a marriage; for a good half hour, the action narrows to the Roman apartment of Paul and his wife, Camille (Brigitte Bardot), as they bathe and bicker. The cool white walls seem to stretch and freeze the space between these two; later, when they move to location on Capri, you expect the warm stone and the welcoming blues of the sea to heal all wounds, but it won't wash. Camille falls for Jerry; she is a Penelope who couldn't wait for her wanderer to return. Jerry doesn't love her, of course; his mind merely frames her as a leading lady, or an odalisque. Right from the start, when a naked Camille itemizes her beauty, "Contempt" is not simply an acid satire on filmmaking, and a cruel act of worship toward the myth of Bardot, but a larger look at the way in which we helplessly cast others as the unwilling co-stars in our own lives. Happy endings, in so treacherous a world, are as rare as revelation, and Godard's film, though it sports the nimbleness of comedy, strolls defiantly in the direction of the tragic.

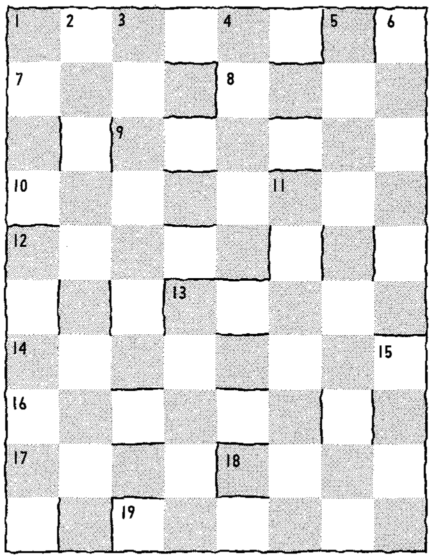
The film is rife, of course, with intellectual nostalgia, which some will prefer to interpret as snobbery. The characters quote Dante and Hölderlin at each other, and, what's more, they recognize each other's quotations. Back in 1963, a director could still hope to flatter, rather than alienate, an audience by inviting it to eavesdrop on his conversations. The rebellious Godard, like most renegades, had the comfort of a tradition at his back; it is inconceivable that such a figure could have flourished in a culture that had not previously produced Diderot. And yet "Contempt" is far from off-putting. It's willful and obsessive, for sure—the creation of a cold-blooded hothead—and yet it emerges, after thirty-four years, as quite inexplicably moving. At one point, Fritz Lang—the gentleman ironist, more resplendent than ridiculous in monocle and pin-striped suit—pauses to light a cigarette and then starts walking. The camera tracks him against a deep-red wall, and Georges Delerue's hypnotizing score rises and stirs at the sight of him, under a Homerically hot sun. Why this should break the heart I have no idea, but it does. Maybe it's because I like gods. I like them very much. ♦

Pet owners with unwanted animals can be turned over to rescue agencies that will try and find a suitable home.—*Chicago Tribune.*

Or, failing that, they'll be put to sleep.

8 X 10 CRYPTIC

NO. 5 BY MONIKA ZOOK



ACROSS

- **1** Game birds kick up a fuss (6)
- **7** Something thorny in a plot came up (4)
- **8** Stooge spoils retreats (4)
- **9** Test fish, holding fork? (3,3)
- **10** Aircraft in battle distort route (8)
- **12** Flavoring article is eatery's first (5)
- **13** Almost stupid as a French novelist (5)
- **14** Austrian composer butchers plays (8)
- **16** Number in Spanish article divisible by two (6)
- **17** Magritte's partial awareness (4)
- **18** In the sound, look for wharf (4)
- **19** A place to drive around while relaxed (2,4)

DOWN

- **1** Get big, menacing sound before the finale (4)
- **2** Bond is in for upcoming novel (5,1,4)
- **3** Pair of students splitting round, fat bird (7)
- **4** Fashion steps over a fence for the audience (5)
- **5** Before ram, leap fences? (10)
- **6** Changes in staler bananas (6)
- **11** Country song about guys (7)
- **12** State positively, "Lock one up" (6)
- **13** Two singers wrapping five in comforter (5)
- **15** Wear out an important part of a car (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 4 appears on page thirty-three. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

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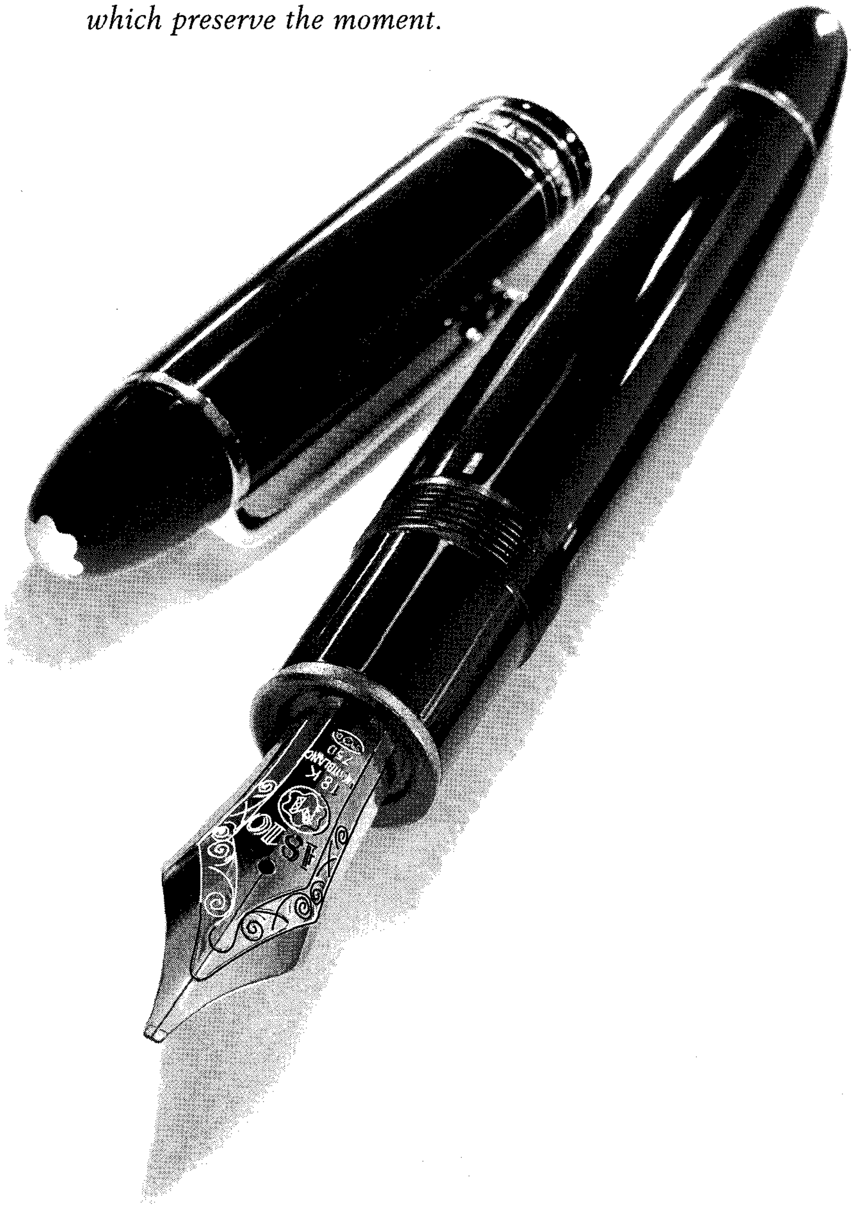

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SHOUTS & MURMURS

APPLY HERE FOR HONG KONG PASSPORT

BY BRUCE McCALL

STARTING *right now, no more travel for you, Hong Kong Citizen! Notice: New dress code requires that all must carry passport in pants waistband. This to identify violators of poop-scoop law. Fill out application and wait at curb for collection.*

1. I hereby renounce: drinks with little umbrellas; Kung Fu movies; two-tone wingtip shoes; Rice-A-Roni; car horns that play the theme from "Elvira Madigan."

2. TRUE OR FALSE: I would rather sit for eight hours in one of those huge plush easy chairs covered with antimacassars in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing smoking corn-silk cigarettes, sipping hemp tea, and talking Marxist-Leninist shop with a delegation of Cuban dung-beetle exterminators than spend five minutes on the gilded throne of England.

3. I understand that the fee for this passport includes the cost of a lifetime subscription to (*check one*):

☐ Peasants and Workers Mime Opera of Beijing
☐ Red Steam Boilermakers Semiannual Open Invitational Pie-Plate Juggling Tournament
☐ Peasants and Workers Spade-Juggling Competition
☐ Fang-Hoi Society Cricket-Eating Contest Finals

4. Queen Elizabeth II attempts to shoplift a quart of rum at Hong Kong Airport's Duty-Free Store. Your duty is to:

(a) fine her pet corgi,
(b) confiscate her pet corgi,
(c) cook her pet corgi.

5. Choose the description that fits you better:

☐ "I love bean curd, burlap suits, and menial outdoor work."
☐ "I love parties, Cadillacs, drugs, golf, and goofing off."

6. Supply the questions to these answers:

(a) A twelve-ounce bag of cricket crisps.
(b) The Gang of Four did it.
(c) I richly deserve the maximum sentence.

7. My favorite film of all time is (*circle one*):

(a) "Steamshovel Girl of the Yangtze"
(b) "Red Cinders Over Ha-Shuan"
(c) "Ling Po, Boy Guardian of the Creosote Quota"
(d) "The Sound of Music"

8. Ha Feng's bachelor pad on the thirty-fourth floor of a downtown luxury high-rise has a pop-up toaster, an electric coin sorter, a ream of carbon paper—the works. The Block Captain requests that it be handed over to the Party for use as a clubhouse for the neighborhood worm collective. Ha Feng responds (*check one*):

☐ "Make yourself lost, for tonight a Sweater Girl will join me for cribbage and a Pearl Buck movie on TV!"
☐ "I thought you'd never ask—to the neighborhood worm collective!"
☐ "I am found out! I cannot shed my otiose lounge lizard's skin! I jump! Ayeee! P.S. Keys on the coffee table."

9. Complete the following Citizenship Essay by filling in the blank spaces with your own words:

"Huzzah! Hong Kong is at last ______ from the Imperialist tricksters! All my former rights have been _______ by the just action of the People's Republic of ______, whose laws I ______, on pain of _______ and _______. All former promises are hereby _______. I will travel only to Cuba and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or to Ping-Pong tournaments ______ by the Internal Police. I ______ that I am being watched."

10. I vow to vigilantly repel the hooligan racketeer-provocateur scapegraces now flooding Hong Kong with genuine Rolex watches, authorized Kenny G CDs, and real Hermès handbags. In fact, I aid in the cause by enclosing with this application my genuine Rolex watches, Kenny G CDs, and real Hermès handbags.

11. I have lied __ times in filling out this Passport Application. I beg to (a) take a self-criticism course, (b) make a cash donation of $_____ to the Asphalt Coöperative Forklift Fund, (c) take my next vacation in the Four Stars Gypsum Mine.

12. Match these current and future occupations:

1. Stockbroker
2. Banker
3. Merchant
4. Teacher
5. Used-car salesman

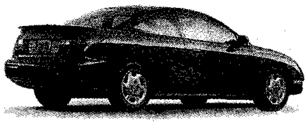
a. Locomotive oiler
b. Street sweeper
c. Kathie Lee Gifford seamstress
d. Duck catcher
e. Boiler attendant

I swear the above information to be true. For fine dining in Hong Kong I recommend _________. Ask for _________. Tipping in Hong Kong restaurants is generally ________ per cent of the bill. Best bargains in home electronics are found at ___________. The hottest singles bar is ___________. ♦

hat if we told you the person who sold you your car also helped build it?

Teamwork is not something we restrict to the Saturn plant. It extends out into the community, as well. UAW team members are helping raise money for Camp Fish Tales, a barrier-free camp for kids and adults with disabilities. You could help, too, if you want, by calling 517-797-8800.*

Every so often, a group of Saturn retailers will come down to Spring Hill and work the assembly line here at the Saturn plant. Oh, it's not like we have them build engines or anti-lock brakes or anything like that. But they do help put on doors or install seats. And they do work side by side with the men and women who build Saturns for a living. It's more about team building than it is a lesson in manufacturing. Although, after a couple of hours, it can get pretty hard to tell a retailer from an autoworker. But then, at Saturn, that's sort of the point.



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This 1997 Saturn SC2 has an M.S.R.P. of $14,095, including retailer prep and transportation. Of course, the total cost will vary seeing how options are extra, as are things like tax and license. We'd be happy to provide more detail at 1-800-522-5000 or look for us on the Internet at http://www.saturncars.com. ©1997 Saturn Corporation.

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